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GOING TO MARKETS  
AND  
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.











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# GOING TO MARKETS

AND

## GRAMMAR SCHOOLS,

BEING A SERIES OF

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL RECORDS AND SKETCHES

OF FORTY YEARS

SPENT IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES,

FROM

1830 TO 1870.

EMBELLISHED WITH THIRTY-FOUR WOOD ENGRAVINGS,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BY

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

LONDON :

WILLIAM FREEMAN, 102, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1870.

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# DEDICATION.

TO THE

REV. ROBERT WHISTON, M.A.,

HEAD MASTER OF THE ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL,

AND

SENIOR FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

MY DEAR SIR,—The paternal and patriotic manner in which you have caused to be restored to the Foundation Boys of the Rochester Cathedral Grammar School, a more adequate share of the revenues belonging to the whole Collegiate Body, must be a source of great gratification not only to yourself, but to all those who take an interest in the just appropriation of Educational Trust Funds.

Having, myself, been engaged in exposing the maladministrations of Endowed Schools, for between twenty and thirty years, I feel the greatest pleasure in being permitted to dedicate this Autobiography to you; the contents being, as I feel, but a very dry exposition of my wishes to secure public attention to this great national question.

I have no doubt that you will agree with me that it is high time these trees of knowledge, planted by pious hands and hearts, were secured for the benefit of the poor and meritorious youth, of both sexes, of the United Kingdom;—that these mental storehouses were fairly thrown open to the talents and industry of all those who need and would make a good use of them,—and whose claims to participate in the funds of these School Trusts, are as just and well founded, as those of the lawful inheritors of the lands of this country are to the rentals thereof.

The fact is now fully established that the benefits intended for the education of poor children, have been taken from the legitimate owners, and lavished upon those who, from their position and profession, ought to have been the first to have maintained their proper uses.

Allow me, Sir, in conclusion, to express a hope that the effects of recent legislation, may lead the friends of education to redouble their exertions, and thus ensure a full and equitable restoration of the Endowed Schools of the United Kingdom to those for whose benefit they were founded.

I beg to remain,

My Dear Sir,

Yours most faithfully,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Wolverhampton, October 31st, 1870.



## P R E F A C E .

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"It is not too much to say that unless the Endowed Schools can be put to good use, it would be better to get rid of them altogether."—*Vide Schools' Inquiry Commissioners Report, Vol. I, Chap. VII, page 572.*

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THE reform of the Endowed Schools of the United Kingdom has been attempted by various means for upwards of 260 years.

In the year 1601, an Act was passed usually known as the "Statute of Charitable Uses," (43rd Eliz. cap. 4). From that period down to the present, Acts of Parliament and Commissions have followed each other in rapid succession, and, step by step, as these hoped for remedies have been applied, the diseases of misappropriation and misdirection, in many cases, both as to finances and education, have become worse.

The Act of 1601 gave the Lord Chancellor power to issue a Commission, directed to each Bishop of every Diocese and four Commissioners, to inquire by jury concerning Charities. These Commissioners were empowered to make decrees, which might be varied by the Lord Chancellor.

This Act also enabled the Court of Chancery to establish an ambulatory tribunal, emanating from and responsible to itself.

Prior to this Act being passed, the Court had original and inherent power and jurisdiction over Endowments.

The system established in 1601 continued until the middle of the last century, when proceedings by information, through the Attorney-General, were adopted, either by relators or *ex-officio*.

No general Record of Endowments existed until the Gilbert Act was passed, in the 26th year of George the Third's reign, when returns were made, verified by oath of the Clergy, the Churchwardens, and Overseers of each parish. These Returns were reported on by a Committee of the House of Commons, which sat in 1786 and 1788.

Out of the 13,000 parishes and townships required to make returns, only fourteen omitted to do so. These returns were re-printed in 1816, and proved to be a very useful record. At that date the aggregate income of charities was £528,710.

The bad management of Grammar Schools has been commented upon for a long period; so far back as 1795, in the case of the *King v. Archbishop of York*, Lord Kenyon observed in the Court of Queen's Bench, that "the Grammar Schools were reduced to a lamentable state, that they were merely empty walls without scholars, and that everything was neglected but the receipt of the emoluments." And Lord Eldon, in a case before the Court of Chancery, in 1807, said "it was necessary that it should be perfectly understood that Charity Estates all over the kingdom were dealt with in a manner most grossly improvident, amounting to the most direct breach of trust."

In 1812, the Act of 52nd Geo. 3rd, cap. 101, was passed—this is known as Sir Samuel Romilly's Act, the chief object of its powers being to give the Court a more summary jurisdiction by way of petition.

In the same session, another Act was passed (52nd Geo. 3rd, cap. 102,) requiring that all statistics, as well as the names of all Trustees of Endowments, should be registered in the various offices of the Clerks of the Peace, in order to be transmitted by them to the enrolment office of the Court of Chancery. This Act was a failure, as no penalties were laid down for non-compliance with its requirements by Trustees.

Then followed the appointment of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, in 1816, upon the motion of Henry Brougham, (the late Lord Brougham and Vaux,) to "inquire

into the education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, and to Report their observations thereupon."

The Report of the Committee of 1816 was issued in that year and dated the 20th of June. That Committee declared through their Report "that a very large number of poor children were wholly without the means of instruction, that their parents were very desirous of obtaining education for them, and that they felt persuaded that great advantages would result from Parliament taking steps to meet the deficiency of instruction which the poor were labouring under."

The Committee (although their labours were confined to the Endowed Schools of the Metropolis) stated that they had received communications from various parts of the country as to the state of education generally, but especially as to that given in the larger towns. Upon this the Committee suggested that a Parliamentary Commission should be appointed to investigate the state of the whole of these Charitable Educational Endowments.

The Committee was revived in 1817, but made no Report; it was again revived in 1818, and they reported on the 3rd of June in that year. These Reports led to the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry into Charities.

From 1818 to 1837, four successive Commissions were in operation; they made thirty-two Reports, occupying no less than thirty-eight folio volumes. In these Reports 28,880 Charities, including Endowed Schools, were recorded, of which the aggregate income amounted at that time to £1,209,395. To this Mr. Earle added one-fifth, for subsequent increase of value, bringing the total income in round numbers, up to one-and-a-half millions.

These Reports were afterwards divided into County Sections. Then again Digests of each County, consisting of from 50 to 100 pages each, were published under the title of "Returns of Charities for distribution among the Poor, Statistics of Grammar Schools, Schools not Classical, and of Educational gifts not attached to Endowed Schools;" these were published in 1843.

The whole of these Digests have also been published in two complete volumes of 1,624 pages, and, still further, a final volume

was published, called "Digests of the General Charities, and Summaries of the whole of the Charity Property and Income." This gave the totals.

An Act was passed in 1818, authorizing the establishment of a Commission (58 Geo. 3, cap. 91.) Their Inquiries were limited to Educational Charities for the Poor in England and Wales. The exempted charities were the Universities, the Colleges and Halls therein, and most of the larger Endowed Schools, and all Collegiate and Cathedral Churches, as also all charities having special visitors.

It was not then known to the general public that nearly all these Endowments belonged to the poor, but as the parties who were in receipt of the vast revenues and privileges appertaining thereto were well aware of that fact, they sought and gained exemption from the Inquiries of this Commission.

The first Commission was dated 20th August, 1818; it was composed of fourteen Commissioners, eight of whom were paid; they made two Reports, on the 2nd of March and 5th of July, 1819.

In 1819, another Act (59 Geo. 3, cap. 81) was passed, increasing the number of Commissioners to 20, of whom 10 were paid. This Act, and all others down to 1831, kept up the previous exemptions, and added an additional number of the larger Schools.

Under the powers of this and two subsequent Acts, the Commissioners made twenty two Reports; which ceased in 1830. Another Commission was appointed in 1831, for two years, which issued five Reports, the main conclusion being, that where the Grammar Schools had special visitors they were in a deplorable state.

Then came the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons, in 1835, who recommended the creation of a Board of Control, consisting of three Commissioners, with ample powers to investigate and reform abuses. This Committee included Lord John Russell and the late Sir Robert Peel.

Concurrently therewith, another Act was passed (5 and 6 William 4th, cap. 71) authorizing the appointment of not fewer

than thirty Commissioners to investigate up to the 1st of March, 1837. Under the powers of this Act, a fourth Commission was issued on the 22nd October, 1835, to continue up to the 1st of July, 1837.

This Commission commented in its Report upon the state of many of the Grammar Schools in which instruction was limited to the dead languages, *or extended to other branches of education only on terms which excluded such children as were the immediate objects of the foundation.*

In 1840, an Act, called Sir Eardley Wilmot's Act, (3 and 4 Vict., cap. 77,) for improving the condition and extending the benefits of Grammar Schools, was passed. Unfortunately the provisos and exemptions of that Act rendered its good clauses almost nugatory.

In 1843, Sir George Grey introduced a Bill on Educational Charities; this was withdrawn. In 1844, Lord Lyndhurst presented another Bill with the same view; it only went through a second reading. In 1845, he brought in another Bill, and this was never heard of after the first reading in the House of Commons. In 1846, he again brought in the same Bill, which was lost, on the second reading, by a majority of two, chiefly through the opposition of the City Companies, and the denunciations of Lord Cottenham. Singular to say Lord Cottenham, who, soon after this, got accession to power, although so opposed to the reform of these abuses, when in opposition, tried to get Bills passed in 1847 and 1848, both of which failed. In 1849, the Solicitor-General introduced another Bill, assisted by Lord John Russell, Sir George Grey, and the Attorney-General. This did not reach the House of Lords.

As the opposition from various interested quarters was so powerful in the House of Commons, another Commission was issued under the Sign Manual, in 1849. It embraced nine members and a Secretary, all unpaid, viz:—Lord Chichester, Lord Ducie, Lord H. Vane, Lord Wharncliffe, Mr. F. Peel, Mr Sotheron, Master Blunt, Mr. James Hill, and Mr. Kingscote; the stationery and postage were the only expenses incurred.

This Commission, from not being appointed under Parliamentary authority, had no compulsory powers; its orders in many instances were disputed, and answers to inquiries were refused. The Commissioners made their Report on 25th June, 1850.

Before this Report was presented, another Bill had been introduced into the House of Commons, and read a second time. This Bill was fiercely opposed, on this occasion, by that old enemy of Endowed School Reform, Mr. Turner, afterwards Lord Justice Turner, aided by Mr. Goulburn and Mr. Roundell Palmer, nevertheless it was carried in the Lower House, but, like its seven predecessors, it was finally unsuccessful, being withdrawn after the first reading in the House of Lords.

Another Bill was laid before the House of Lords, in 1851, by Lord Truro; this never reached the House of Commons. In 1852, another and a similar Bill was brought into the House of Commons by the Attorney-General, Sir A. Cockburn. Upon the change of Government in that year, Sir Frederick Thesiger took charge of it, but a host of opponents entered the field, and no less than ninety-six petitions were presented against it, amongst which were petitions from the five Royal Hospitals of London, five from City Companies, three from Eton, Winchester, and Rugby, separate ones from St. Luke's, the Sons of the Clergy, The Foundling Hospital, and The Trinity House, Hull, and so it died after one sitting, *pro-formâ*, of the Committee of the whole House.

In 1853, Lord Cranworth introduced the existing Charitable Trusts Acts, which was passed, and received the Royal assent on the 20th August, 1853, and thus after thirty-three years of attempted legislation by all parties in both Houses of Parliament, one step was gained in the right direction.

Since the passing of the Act of 1853, two Commissions have been appointed, and they have published the results of their labours in voluminous Reports.

The first of these Commissions was appointed, by command of Her Majesty the Queen, under Letters patent, dated the 30th



of June, in the 22nd year of her reign (1858.) Their Report was issued in 1861, and is divided into six parts, under the heads of "The Education of the Independent Poor"—"The Education of Pauper Children"—"The Education of Vagrants and Criminals"—"State Schools"—and "Charitable Endowments"—concluding with elaborate statistics of the whole.

To this Report is added the Assistant Commissioners Reports—evidences taken by the Commissioners, and answers to questions sent out by circulars—the whole occupying 3439 pages, and forming a thorough History of Education in England.

The Commissioners appointed were the Duke of Newcastle, Sir J. T. Coleridge, Wm. Chas. Lake, M.A., Wm. Rogers, M.A., Goldwin Smith, M.A., N. W. Senior, M.A., and Edward Miall, Esq.

The duties of their appointment were to "inquire into the present state of popular education in England, and to consider and report what measures, if any, are required for the extension of sound and elementary instruction to all classes of the people."

The Commissioners, at the close of their labours, in 1861, stated that at the commencement of the Inquiry they found that though various Government departments were in possession of much information respecting detached portions of the subject, none could furnish *a complete account* of the state of education of *any class* of the population, or of any district of the country.

This may appear strange, but it must be recollected that the Committee of Council for Education (who had issued no less than 27 octavo volumes since 1839, and which contain all the School Inspectors Reports,) do not issue Reports as to education, but simply as to schools—the Inspectors being Inspectors of Schools and not of education—having no experience of uninspected schools, nor any means of ascertaining what proportion of the population grows up in ignorance.

The Commissioners, thus finding that the resources available in print did not comprise a satisfactory history of the state of Education, thereupon appointed ten Assistant Commissioners, viz. :—The Revds. J. Hedley and J. Fraser, for the Agricultural;

Messrs. Winder and Coode, the Manufacturing; Messrs. Foster and Jenkins, the Mining; Mr. Cumin and Mr. Hare, the Maritime; and Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Wilkinson, for the Metropolitan Districts; to each of whom a district was assigned, and they were called upon to examine minutely into the condition of education in such districts separately.

These gentlemen completed their duties in seven months, and in all cases they were willingly aided by the public, except by the Catholic Poor School Committee, who offered that if the Commissioners would appoint one or more Catholic Inspectors every information should be given to them; this was declined by the Commissioners, yet after this refusal Mr. Charles Langdale, on behalf of the Catholic Poor School Committee, offered to send in statistics of the Catholic Schools.

The labours of this Commission were very heavy. They pronounced that most of the Endowed Schools were from the earliest times founded for the *native and resident poor* with sometimes the undisputed right of the nearest of kin of the founders.

They said also that although Grammar Schools were practically made Classical Schools, and confined to the class who desire that kind of education, yet that it is admitted that that interpretation of the word grammar is historically erroneous, and that such schools were destined to supply a general education.

That the education taught in these schools was the same as it was a century ago, that the trustees were utterly apathetic and extremely jealous of interference, (p. 42.) that they quench private zeal and give no adequate substitute, which they are sorry to say is overlooked by the Charity Commissioners, by their not having brought *propria motu*, any effective influence to bear upon their improvement or resuscitation, (p. 43.)

They asserted that in too many cases the Endowed Schoolmaster is indifferent as to the school being full, (p. 67.)

Of the counties of Durham and Cumberland it is recorded that they teach the same things over and over again, that the boys were idle, dirty, disorderly, and unhappy looking,—that the masters were notorious for drunkenness, and as a climax, that

the Bishop of Durham asserted that "Endowed Schools were the curse of his Diocese," (page 336,)\* and to this the Dean and several other clergymen agreed.

In Wales (Vol. I, p. 465,) Mr. Jenkins said that the state of the Endowed Schools was disgraceful, that the trusts were neglected and often perverted, and that the masters were quite incompetent, and, at page 467, one clergyman stated, "We hardly ever heard of an Endowed School doing any good, Endowments are the greatest obstacles in education, and the teachers are independent and lazy,"—another said, that "*as a whole these Schools are worse than any others,*" and the Dean of Carlisle said that, "generally speaking they are unmitigated evils, and that in most cases we should be better altogether without them."

The Rev. D. Coleridge (St. Mark's College,) said that as now constituted they are hindrances to popular education.

The Endowed Schools' Amendment Act, passed on the 2nd of August, 1869, is a measure of great importance. It is the offspring of the Commission that was appointed in 1864; but the Act does not go so far in the direction of popular education as the Commissioners did.

In the conclusion of their Report they promulgated a series of Recommendations, many of which were adopted in the Act, but still many of the best of them were passed by.

In their introductory remarks they state that the schools "do not teach what is wanted." (Report p. 576,) that the teaching of Latin and Greek has, in a vast number of cases, emptied the schools, and that this decay arises from the undue prominence given to what no parents within their reach desire their children to learn, and they add that many schools teach without regard to the needs of the place in which they stand.

At page 588 of the Report they proposed to abolish the Church

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\* It is strange, passing strange, after reading this assertion to find at page 376 of the Report, that the Dean and Chapter pocketed an Endowment of £1,000 per annum, for teaching eighteen poor boys grammar—that is £1 per week for each boy.

of England qualification for trustees, the too general rule of employing clergymen as Schoolmasters,\* the binding the schools to the Church of England doctrines, and the jurisdiction of the Bishop as visitor.

At page 593 they recommended a selection of the boys by merit, as the best plan of free education, instead of indiscriminate free admission.

This is not the case at the Birmingham classical and elementary schools, wherein every boy is taught free of cost, nor will it hold good when tested by the *invariable practice* of teaching the classics free. If it is good to teach the classics free; it is still better to give a free commercial education.

The Commissioners protest strongly against the schools being confined to certain circumscribed areas in regard to the admission of scholars, forgetting that generally a founder wished to encourage the education of those children only who shall be born in the same parish as he was, or as in some cases born or resident in the same parish wherein he served his apprenticeship; and forgetting also that boarders are confined to a much smaller area, viz., the school masters residences.

And still further, if the school should be filled with day boys only, it would be wrong to admit boys from other parishes where the parents are able to pay for the boys reaching it by rail, or gig, and returning home daily, which would end in the poor boys of the parish being prevented from having the sole occupation of the schools to which they alone have the right by residential or birth inheritance.

The Commissioners also proposed that where there are boarders that such should be allowed to compete with the day-boys.† It is palpable that such a system would not be fair, because the boarders are taught after school hours, whilst the day boys gene-

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\* Since Mr. Beach, a layman, was appointed head master to the Wolverhampton endowed school, the number of scholars has increased about five-fold.

† Report, page 596.

rally have no such advantage, being left to the supervision of their parents or their own determination to learn or not learn their lessons beyond school hours ; and thus where exhibitions are attached to a school the boarders would, as a matter of course, secure them under such a competition, as they do now at Bremsgrove, and numerous other schools.

They proposed to give the master no salary, but to allow him a rent-free residence, and a fee for each scholar. This is not so good a plan as that carried out at Birmingham, viz., the giving a moderate salary and a proportionate share of the capitation fees, which are drawn from the school revenue, instead of the boys parents. Under the Commissioners plan if a school was to fall off in scholars the masters would be starved out, and the fund would accumulate for no purpose whatever, and good masters would not accept such terms. On the other hand, if incompetent masters caused the school to be emptied they could be discharged. The governors have the power of appointing, so they should in all cases have the power of discharging, if sufficient reason should arise.

The Commissioners proposed to take away the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery over these endowments, except as regards deciding on questions of claims of property, and misconduct on the part of trustees. They objected to a new Board of Commissioners, and wished the Charity Commissioners to be the only Board of Appeal, and therefore they recommended an increase in the number of that Board, and the appointment of a Minister of Education, who should sit in the House of Commons.

They upheld the power of the Provincial Boards of Trustees as to framing new schemes, instead of the Charity Commissioners, on the ground that residents understand the wants of the locality better than Commissioners living in or near London.

The Commissioners at page 638 strongly recommended the election of trustees by the votes of the ratepayers, and supported it by saying that "no skill in organization, no careful adaptation of the means in hand, to the best ends, can do so much for education as the earnest co-operation of the people," and they point

to the American, Scotch, and Swiss schools, as proofs of the wisdom of the plan.

They threw out another suggestion, that County Boards composed of chairmen of the Boards of Guardians, would probably do best for a time as Guardians of Endowed Schools, but they re-assert their opinion that direct election would be the best plan, (page 643).

The appointment of these Commissions alarmed the "upper ten thousand" as to what are called the "Public Schools" being likely to be brought under examination.

They therefore took the bull by the horns and had a favourable Commission appointed in 1862. The members were the Earl of Clarendon, Earl of Devon, Lord Lyttelton, Sir S. H. Northcote, Bart., H. H. Vaughan, Esq., the Rev. W. H. Thompson, and the Hon. E. Twisleton.

They took evidence as regarded the Charter House; St. Paul's; Merchant Taylors; Harrow; Rugby, and Shrewsbury schools. But strange to say that whilst all the gentlemen who gave evidence had been nursed and brought up in the system, and most of them were interested in the continuance of the misappropriations of the funds, not one person was examined who was adverse to it. Of course it will be said that it was necessary to get evidence from those who had the educational management of these schools, but the importance of the financial department was lost sight of and no opposition witness was called in on this head.

When the Public Schools' Bill was subjected to the test of a Select Committee of, the House of Lords, and finished on the 5th of May, 1865, it was sent to the House of Commons on the 1st of July, and on the 5th it was ordered to be printed.

The Committee of the Upper House was named on the 4th of May, and was composed of the Prince of Wales, the Lord President, the Duke of Marlborough, the Earls of Derby, Devon, Clarendon, Carnarvon, Harrowby, Powis, and Stanhope; Viscounts Stratford de Redcliffe, and Eversley; the Bishop of London, and Lords Houghton, Wrottesley, and Lyttelton. Many

Petitions were presented against the Bill, and counsel were allowed to be heard. A singular matter happened as to one unfortunate Petition, viz., that from the Cultivators of Natural Science. This was the only one that was rejected, thus shewing the dislike of the Committee to the study of the sciences.

The Earl of Clarendon was elected chairman.

Petitions were presented against the Bill, (and supported by counsel) from Rugby, Harrow, the Provost of Eton College, the masters and others of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge; the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Shrewsbury, the Masters and others of St. Mary Magdalene, Cambridge.

Evidence was given for five days by twenty-nine witnesses, commencing on the 11th of May, and ending on the 29th, but it was all of no avail; so the obnoxious Bill was carried.

These schools have been well guarded by fortresses and officials of every grade. Here are Doctors of Divinity as visitors, to see to every body doing their duty, which they do not see to; Masters of Arts (not sciences, as that would be *infra dig.*) to teach the young idea how to *shoot* in these fortresses, and Bachelors of Arts to cram the hungry minds of the youths with what they never use, or find of any use, after they leave the fortresses, to fight the great battle of English life. Well, what of the results of all the care in attempting to produce "profound classical scholars?" simply this—no results at all!

Let us examine this very important question under four heads, according to the grade of the Foundations.

First—the Universities, which in past times were simply schools. Well, never mind past-times; what is Oxford doing now for £500,000 per annum? nothing whatever; nay worse than that, letting the weeds grow so profusely, that they become steeped in extravagance, vice, and laziness which in after days lead to hopeless poverty.

But what of the "profound classical scholars?"—they are remarkable by their absence in the present day. But surely there are some. Yes, by reputation; such as a clergyman curtly described, in addressing a learned Lord in a London Newspaper,

“go home to your more congenial task of turning good English classical poetry into bad and bastard Greek.”

What of the professional degrees of D.D. and M.A.? Read the Blue Book, published in 1852 by the Oxford Commissioners, six out of seven of these Commissioners being clergymen, and you will pronounce Degrees to be a huge sham. This Blue Book contains no less than 755 folio pages, and exposes the whole system.

The whole of the colleges at Oxford are, or should be, lay eleemosynary corporations, but they are all clerical, crammed by those who prate about their generosity in giving “conscience clauses” to national day schools, forgetting that tax-payers of every denomination pay towards their support, and therefore that all children should be equally admissable without religious tests.

Second—the Cathedral Schools. These are still worse than the Universities, inasmuch as the Chapters avoid keeping any schools at all within their walls for foundation scholars in seventeen out of the twenty-eight Cathedrals in England and Wales; and where they do keep a school they adhere to the ancient number of scholars (say 40), and even these, except in two cases, are never sent to the Universities, as ordered by Henry VIII.

But some may say, and others have said, that they have no funds for such purposes. This is far from being true, as from the returns ordered by the House of Commons, and printed on the 25th of April, 1865, these twenty-eight Cathedrals were in the receipt of an annual average of £367,097,\* and out of this revenue they only contributed £1450 to all their schools!

\* Gross Revenues of Cathedrals in England and Wales in three years.—

*Vide* Returns made for the years 1861-2-3 in some cases, and 1862-3-4 in others (ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, 25th April, 1865).

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Bangor ... ..	4,087	9	5	Chichester ... ..	13,588	15	2
Bath and Wells...	15,772	14	1	Durham ... ..	220,243	0	0
Canterbury ... ..	62,239	15	2	Ely ... ..	59,607	13	10
Carlisle ... ..	16,715	5	3	Exeter ... ..	34,500	0	0
Chester ... ..	20,392	15	3	Gloucester & Bristol	26,551	1	8½



This is spent on the home schools, but they are all bound by a law passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth to send boys to the Universities also; thus—

For every 50 Scholars 10 Students at College.

"	40	"	8	"	"
"	24	"	4	"	"
"	18	"	2	"	"

Except in two cases, viz., Rochester and Chester, this is not done, which cannot be from poverty, either as to the state of the funds of these Cathedrals, or the stipends paid to the various members thereof.

It must be borne in mind that the schools form essential parts of Cathedral Corporations. Mr. C. J. Elton laid down (*inter alia*) in his memorandum on Cathedral Schools, as follows:—\*

The pious uses for which the Cathedrals were founded are threefold, viz:—1. Divine Service; 2. Religious and liberal education; 3. Alms-giving. One of the main objects of every cathedral foundation was the instruction of youth in "devotion and learning."

The schools form an integral part of each of these Cathedrals, not a mere adjunct. They were not, therefore, founded "in connection with the Cathedrals," a mode of expression which is common, but liable to lead to mistakes in the treatment of any questions as to the employment of in-

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Hereford ... ..	14,844	16	6½	Westminster ...	154,323	7	10
Lichfield ... ..	7,799	15	0	Winchester ...	56,061	0	5
Lincoln ... ..	22,038	3	1½	York ... ..	18,227	0	0
Llandaff ... ..	5,916	2	9	Salisbury ...	No return.		
London ... ..	40,875	1	6	St. David's ...	No return.		
Manchester ...	26,537	10	11	Worcester ...	No return.		
Norwich ... ..	28,137	5	4	Add for the last )	117,689	3	6
Oxford ... ..	64,084	17	6	3 the average )			
Peterborough ...	18,000	0	0				
Ripon ... ..	15,371	18	6		£1,101,289	15	7½
Rochester ... ..	28,428	2	10				
St. Asaph ... ..	9,257	0	0				

\* *Vide* Schools' Inquiry Commissioners' Reports, Vol. VII., pp. 637, 638 639, 640, and 641, 1868.

creased cathedral revenues. It would be a mistake of this kind to treat the endowment of such schools as "a charity on a charity," *i.e.*, a charge on the revenues of a separate charitable corporation.

The "poor scholars of the Cathedral" were to be elected by the Dean and Chapter expressly that "piety and learning might flourish in the Cathedral, and in time bear fruit to the glory of God and the advantage and adornment of the state." These "*pueri ecclesie*" were to be maintained at the charge of the Cathedral, as well as the choristers, and all the masters.

Out of the common revenues of the Cathedral the masters, scholars, and choristers were to receive stipends and livery gowns, as ministers of the Cathedral; for the masters as well as the grammar scholars (*qui in ecclesiâ alantur*) had a part to take in the daily service.

These notices show that the grammar school was from the first recognized as an important member of the Cathedral body, and not as an excrescence, a "private institution," or a separate charity.

It remains to be considered, what provision out of the corporate revenues was made for the schools, and to what extent they are entitled to share in the increased wealth of the bodies to which they belong.

It was at first intended that a certain number of poor students should be maintained at the Universities out of the Cathedral funds.

They were also eligible to King's scholarships before the usual age for election, if properly qualified in other respects.

The grammar schools in the new Cathedrals were intended to benefit two classes of boys, *viz.* :—

- a. The poor scholars of the Cathedrals, or King's scholars.
- b. All such other boys as might be sent to the school for a liberal education.

The King's scholars were to be *poor boys*, such as might be destitute of help from friends, with a natural aptitude for learning. There are none now in the Cathedrals founded by Henry VIII.

Each poor scholar was to receive *free board, lodgings, and education, and in addition to this a small stipend for service in the Cathedral, with an allowance for a livery gown.*

The scholarships were held for six years, which might in special cases be prolonged to seven, a period considered by the founder to be sufficient for acquiring a grammatical knowledge of Latin, and the power of speaking Latin and writing Greek. In other words, the poor scholars were to be prepared for the University.

The Rev. Robert Whiston, who is Head Master of Rochester

Cathedral School wrote a letter to the *Times* of May the 18th, 1864, in which he treated upon the mis-appropriations of Cathedral funds, especially as to the shares due to the scholars.

He stated that in 1861 the capitular property of Westminster Abbey was laid down in Henry VIII's "*Schemes of Bishopricks*" as £2939 16s. out of which each Prebendary was to be paid £28 5s., and the whole forty foundation scholars £148 per annum. The order was that as the rents of the Abbey foundation properties increased the scholars and the Prebendaries stipends were to be increased *pro rata*; but what was the case in 1864? Each Prebendary received on an average of the years 1860-1-2 no less than £2,300 per annum, whilst the boys (through their parents) pay £1,800 per annum for their education! Perhaps it may be supposed that the education given was worth £1,800; nothing of the sort, as we find the Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine* for October, 1864, declaring that as to the boys who go thence to Oxford, "the veriest hum and haw bungler, whose performances would not be tolerated in the first class of a National School, may have secured his Oxford First already—*upon paper!*"

Perhaps like Dr. Dulcimer's scholars in Mr. Kingsley's "Water Babies," the Westminster masters "learn the lessons and the boys hear them," and thus when they get to College, they find that they have left all the learning behind them!

At Worcester the stipends paid to the scholars, have never been more than in the reign of Henry VIII, viz., £2 13s. 4d. whilst each of the Canons stipends have been increased from £20 to upwards of £600. This great increase of the Canons stipends accounts for the money not devoted to keep boys at the University free of cost; and how could it be devoted to that object so long as the Canons take all over and above the miserable stipends paid to the scholars, and the other equally low stipends paid to the various members of the Corporation. This being the case at most of the Cathedral Grammar Schools, it is high time they were placed under the operation of the Endowed Schools Act.

The late Bishops of Exeter and London, in their places in the House of Lords, censured the conduct of the Deans and

Chapters, as to their selfishness, laziness, and disobedience to their Oaths, which are as follows :—

The Canon's oath is—"I, A. B., who have been nominated, elected, and instituted a Canon of this cathedral church of Christ, having in my hand the sacred and holy Gospels of God, swear that I will keep *all and every one* of the *statutes* and *ordinances* of King Henry VIII. our founder, and will take care that they shall be kept by others (so far as may in me lie), and that I will not hinder what may lawfully be done for the profit and *honour* of this church, but will study and promote its interests. *All and every one* of these things I will take on myself. So help me God, and these Holy Gospels of God."

And the Dean says in his oath—"I call God to witness, that I will well and FAITHFULLY observe *all and every one* of the statutes and ordinances of Henry VIII. our founder, and will take care that they shall be studiously observed by others, so far as they concern them. So help me God, and the Holy Gospels of God."

As the Deans and Chapters are either indifferent or averse to the reform of the cathedral schools, it is desirable that the trusteeship should be wholly or partly taken out of their hands.

Perhaps the plan recommended by the Schools' Inquiry Commission would be the best ; at page 646, vol. i, of their Reports published in 1868, they say :

"We have already said that the cathedral schools do not appear to us to stand on the same footing as the other grammar schools. They are the property of the Established Church, and can only be dealt with under the reserve implied in that admission. There can be no doubt that the schools are capable of improvement, and probably that improvement would be accelerated, if a popular element were associated with the Deans and Chapters in the management. We desire to call attention to the suggestions made to us by the Dean of Ely. (Reports, Vol. ii. p. 88). He proposes that to the Dean and Chapter in each case should be added a certain number of lay members, and that the board thus constituted should have charge of the

school. We are of opinion that this suggestion is well worth adoption, but, if adopted, it should be made permanent, and not liable to be set aside by a mere resolution of the Dean and Chapter, as otherwise it would be nugatory. It would probably give additional facilities for the satisfactory working of such an arrangement, and give a firmer position to the school, if, as the Dean of Ely also suggests separate estates were allowed to the cathedral schools, representing what might be considered their fair proportion of the capitular property."

The six large Public Schools, are no better as to the disposal of the funds, and as to the education, than the Cathedral schools.

In Vol. I, page 243, of the Public Schools Commissioners Report, in the list of the evidence tendered was as follows:—

"The Oppidans are so much taken up with boating, that they say 'reading is not in their line, and that it is rather a slow thing to do.' If one of them does happen to distinguish himself at the University, the others are not proud of him—it is 'the thing' not to compete at all—they are promoted for seniority, not by examination or competition—their competition belongs to the crew of the 'eight,' or the players of the 'eleven'—their ambition is not to be a Newcastle Scholar, but Captain of the Boatmen, or of the Cricketers."

With regard to the Harrow School, the treatment of the Day Boys will be found at page 809, Vol. II.

As to Rugby School, the Head Master of the Free Grammar School at Bury St. Edmund's, (the Rev. A. H. Wratishaw), published a pamphlet in 1864, upon the evils of the system pursued there.

He says that he was born at Rugby, and became in due time a founder of the School, and was in two instances appointed as an examiner of the school, by Vice-Chancellors of the University of Cambridge.

His testimony therefore is valuable. His pamphlet styled "A Plea for the ancient charitable foundation of Rugby School," was drawn out by an Address issued by Dr. Temple, the Head Master of the school, to the Trustees, wherein the latter de-

scanted upon the Report of the Commissioners, but at the same time kept out of view the founder's order, viz: that the school was, first, "to serve *chiefly* for the children of Rugby and Brownsover, and *next* for the places adjoining." The Rev. Mr. Wratislaw shows that Rugby School possesses everything that can possibly induce Masters to coax rich men to send their sons there as scholars; there are splendid school buildings, foundation salaries for the Masters, open exhibitions, and junior scholarships, the total income being about £6,400.\*

In 1864, the Head Master had seventy-two boarders who paid him from £100 to £130 each, yearly, and he had a house worth £750 rent-free; he also received a capitation fee on every scholar, out of the school fund, which he raised to £20 each. There were seven assistant-masters, who had forty-six boys each, and who gained full £1,600 per annum each, including their boarders; and there were nineteen lower masters, who got £700 a year each, and the profits on their boarders. £8,000 has been laid out in building a Chapel for the school boys.

It appears that the head master and the Commissioners proposed to throw open the exhibitions and scholarships to all the world—to convert the foundation stipends and schoolmaster's retiring fellowships into new scholarships and exhibitions—to increase the fees of the school, *and build a lower school for Rugby boys*—in other words to erect boarding schools for the benefit of the masters, upon the ruins of the free school, and to establish a lower school for the real inheritors of this great and good foundation.

This school was founded on liberal principles, and it was not until 1777, that a rule was adopted by the trustees, of confining the head mastership to Church of England Masters of Arts. In the same year, an Act of Parliament ordered that the foundation should be for boys "of every town, village, or hamlet, within five miles of Rugby, or such other distance as the majority

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\* The population of Rugby is only 8,000, and there were only seventy boys in the school as foundationers. Is it fair that £6,400 should be taken by the Masters for educating so few?

of the trustees present at any public meeting should ascertain, regard being had to the annual revenues of the trust for the time being."

It is very evident from this that no distant scholars, such as boarders, or others, were to be received, as the school foundation revenues were to be the test of the number to be admitted.

This limit of five miles has been extended to ten in Warwickshire, and five in the adjoining Counties, but there was no permission whatever given to the practice of admitting Boarders from any part of the United Kingdom.

The Rev. Mr. Wratislaw very justly remarks "Neither ought it to be forgotten that the so-called '*Public*' School is, at any rate in the case of Rugby, merely the result of the successful *private* enterprise of the officials of the foundation. To me it appears monstrous that a *public* foundation for the benefit of a locality should be thus swallowed up for the simple benefit of the *private* interests of its own officials."

The last words in his pamphlet are "I appeal to the Press, to Public Opinion, and to Parliament to prevent the perpetration of so great a wrong."

The worst feature of these shameful perversions is, that as the rents belonging to these foundations increase, the number of foundation boys in most cases decrease, yet, seeing this, the Royal Commissioners, instead of putting an end to the Boarding system, are so perverted in their minds, as to say, that the admission of foundationers is a great hindrance to the boarders, and a great injury to the masters, and that they ought to be discouraged and got rid of for the sake of the Boarders!

It is a fact that the POOR, as a body, are the richest in England as to bequests left to them for their special benefit; and if these were properly administered poverty and ignorance would have been long since almost unknown. It is estimated that at the least £500,000 per annum of these bequests are taken from the poor by maladministration, and given to the rich. It has been well said, that "half of the maladministrators do it ignorantly, a quarter of them have a dim glimmering sense that

they are 'robbing the poor, because he is poor,' and the other fourth may be set down as embezzling with their eyes—and also with their pockets—wide open."

With a full knowledge of this state of things, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of introducing a Bill some three years since, proposing to tax all endowments, not so much for the sake of revenue, as to get at the gross amounts of each, so as to be able to make a platform whereby their general reform could be achieved.

Strange combinations were brought about in opposition to this wise and necessary proposition. On this occasion the Earl of Shaftesbury and Archdeacon Manning met together, and Mr. Beresford Hope and Mr. Roebuck kissed each other! But the first named did not mention to Mr. Gladstone, that his own brother, the Hon. Wm. Ashley, was in the receipt of some £2,000 per annum, as head almsman of St. Katherine's foundation, in Regents Park, whilst on the boys and girls schools, there was expended the paltry sum of £300 only, out of a total fund of £7,097, (see pages 814-15).

The proposition of Mr. Gladstone created a great stir, and "Vested interests in danger"\* was sounded throughout the length and breadth of the land; and would it be believed, this was done as an appeal *on behalf of public charities*, by the very "numerous and influential" gentlemen who though trustees, were indifferent as to the true administration of the trusts.

It seems to most people who *dare* to investigate these matters, that the clerical masters of endowed schools believe, as a fortieth Article of the Faith, that Educational Endowments are their private property, and that all lay interference is sinful, and as these reverend gentlemen are patronised by the noblemen of the country, they as a matter of course think it due to their patrons to educate (?) their sons, instead of the sons of tradesmen and artisans, and this partly at the expense of the foundation.

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\* Mr. W. C. Maccready, called the perversion of endowments "vested rights in public wrongs."



It is very strange that rich noblemen—the great landowners and place-owners of the United Kingdom—cannot afford to pay for their sons education, without despoiling those for whom these institutions were founded, and it is equally strange, that clergymen cannot be found, who would be satisfied with salaries derivable from the large foundations, without adding to their professions the trade of licensed victuallers, as Mr. Ayrton said in the House of Commons in 1868.

#### THE QUESTION OF “LIBERA SCHOLA.”

I promised at page 631 to give the correspondence on the question of the meaning of the term “*Libera Schola*” in an appendix, but as I afterwards considered that the essence of it would be better placed in the Preface, I altered my intention.

I also altered my intention as to replying to the letters of an anonymous M.A. in the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* on that question, as I found that he had taken all his arguments from Dr. Kennedy’s letters, which appeared in the *Shrewsbury Journal*, as replies to a series of mine in the *Shrewsbury Chronicle*. It will thus be found that I reply to them both at the same time.

On the 23rd of June, 1860, Dr. Kennedy delivered an Address at a general meeting of the College of Preceptors, in London. In this address (which was published in a pamphlet) he threw down a challenge to the effect that the term “*Libera Schola*,” as generally applied to schools founded in Edward the Sixth’s reign, meant “Free from ecclesiastical jurisdiction,” and not “Free School,” *i.e.*, free from charge for the education imparted in these foundations, and he concluded his challenge thus, “If any arguments of weight can be urged against it, the time is surely come for their production ; if none appear, the interpretation may fairly be considered true.

He had also published his interpretation before this, in a sermon preached at Bath, in 1853, and in a preface to the 2nd edition of “*Sabrinæ Corolla*,” so that he no doubt fancied that the “third time would be the charm,” and that for ever after all men should hold their peace.

Having received a copy of the printed Address, I immediately replied, and as the saying is that "the bigger the bear the better the baiting," I thought that a D.D. would be worth contending with; especially as he was head master of a much perverted Endowed School.

Shrewsbury school was founded for the sons of burgesses, and for native boys of the County of Salop; but the head master made it "free" to all youths of the United Kingdom, provided that their parents would pay handsomely (say £100 per annum including expenses) for their board and education. In this point he forgot the founder's order, and in place of it established what the founder never contemplated, a "Barrack Monastery," alias a Boarding School, whereby he cleared some thing like £5,000 every year.

But in his desire to hide the enormity of this system, he over-shot the mark in stating that the term "*Libera Schola*" meant "freedom from ecclesiastical jurisdiction" as he himself was an ecclesiastic, and the visiter of the school, the second and other masters of the school, and the examiners of the school were all ecclesiastics! Surely then the school was under ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the strongest sense.

Doubtless £ s. d. was at the root of his plan, and he feared that if boys were admitted free of charge, his revenue would be seriously damaged.

But now I must state in as condensed a form as I can, the arguments I brought to bear against his unsupported assertion.\*

Dr. Johnson defined the words "free school" to mean "a school in which learning is given without pay." The word *liber* means "free from *anything*, unrestrained, unimpeded, unshackled," and the word "*schola*" means "a place in which teachers and pupils assemble for purposes of instruction—viz., a school." Take cathedral schools which undoubtedly are under "ecclesias-

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\* *Vide*, Letters between the Rev. B. H. Kennedy, D.D., head master of Shrewsbury Grammar School, and Mr. George Griffith, with articles from the "Shrewsbury Chronicle" and "Shrewsbury Journal" on the Question of the Free Schools of England, and their Abuses. J. Watton, Shrewsbury.

tical jurisdiction," therein boys are not only taught free, but are entitled to be fed and lodged free, and to receive a stipend, and not only so, but a specified number were to be sent to the Universities, and taught free there also.

The seventy foundation boys at Eton, were to be those whose parents were "poor and needy." The Charter House School was founded for the maintenance and education of forty "poor children, such as wanted the means to bring them up." The Bromsgrove school was founded for the sons of those who were of the "meanest degree or ability." The Wolverley school for "free teaching and instructing only of children of the parish," and at Stourbridge it was ordained, "that no money should be demanded of any child." This is very much the case with foundation schools throughout the country.

Dr. Kennedy forgot that the houses occupied by him and the second master were free of rent, simply because the foundation was to be free to all concerned, masters and boys alike. Did it never strike him that these residences were not free from ecclesiastical jurisdiction, so long as he and another ecclesiastic resided in them. The words in the Charter are "*Libera Schola Grammaticalis*," or a school for the free teaching of grammar, or the science of language; and in fact in one of the ordinances it is ordered, that the sons of burgesses were not to be charged for the education of their sons.

Further; in all the schools founded or rather re-founded by Edward VI., the rules and orders were to be enacted by and with the sanction of the bishop of the Diocess, and as these bishops succeeded the Catholic ecclesiastics, undoubtedly the schools still remained under the same power of jurisdiction. Birmingham is one of Edward's foundations, and no boy has ever been charged a penny for education; but on the contrary the Charter orders the free sustentation of the school to be held "inviolably from time to time for ever," and on the Seal of the Charter the words "*libere scole*" appear. There are also the following free schools of the same King's foundations, free to scholars as ordered by him. Bury St. Edmunds, free to sons of

residents; Chelmsford free to forty boys; Giggleswick free to the whole Kingdom; Grantham, free for an area of one mile; Great Grimsby, free to the sons of freemen; Christ's Hospital, London, free for deserted and motherless children; Macclesfield, free for all residents; Morpeth, for sons of freemen; Norwich for thirty boys; Penwortham, for the whole parish; Sedbergh, no limitation; Stafford, for all who can read in the New Testament. These show clearly that Edward VI. meant free from charge by the words "*libera schola*," and Wykeham adopted the same meaning, when he founded New College, at Oxford, as he ordered that the boys were to be taught the "liberal arts and sciences" free of charge.

But the statement made by Dr. Kennedy, that such schools as bore the title "*libera schola*" were not to be subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, has another great flaw in it; there was no class of men in Edward the Sixth's time, fit to conduct such schools but the clergy; therefore it is simply ridiculous to say that he wished to dispossess the very class of men who alone were capable of giving instruction.

Besides this, there is only the bare assumption of Dr. Kennedy as to the meaning of the term. If it was intended to mean freedom from "ecclesiastical jurisdiction," surely these words would have had their representatives in the Latin title. And what are the foundation salaries paid for but to teach native boys free? or is the large sum of £900 paid to the masters to encourage them not to teach native poor boys, but as a bonus for teaching non-Salopians who have no right whatever to be admitted to the school, on any terms.

I think it advisable here to quote from a published letter, addressed to the Lord High Chancellor, by Mr. Grady, the Recorder of Gravesend, in which treating upon the correspondence between Dr. Kennedy and myself, he says:

"But '*liber*' is a word that is well known to lawyers, and is in general use amongst them to express the meaning attached to it by Mr. Griffith.

"*Libera*" is a livery or delivery of so much grass or corn to

a customary tenant, who cut down or prepared the same grass or corn, and received some part or portion of it as a reward or gratuity (Cowell). "*Libera batella*," a free boat; right of fishing. *Plac. in itin. ap. Cestr.* 14 H. VII., (*i.e.*, without money payment); *Libera Chasea Habenda*, a judicial writ granted to a person for a *free chase* belonging to his manor, after proof made by inquiry of a jury that the same of right belongs to him (*Reg. Orig.* 36). "*Libera piscaria*," a free fishery, which being granted to one, he hath a property in the fish, &c., (2 Salk. 637). "*Liber Taurus*," a free bull (*Norf.* 16 Edw. I). *Libera elemosyna*, (*Frankalmoigne*), a tenure by which spiritual service, where an ecclesiastical corporation, sole or aggregate, holdeth lands to them, and their successors, of some lord and his heirs in *free* and perpetual alms, and perpetual supposes it to be fee-simple, though it may pass without the word successors (*Litt. ss.* 133, *Co. Lit.* 94). "*Liberum Tenementum*," a freehold."

It is a fact, too, that the word *free*, in the sense of gratuitous, was applied to grammar schools in the times of Henry II., Henry VI., as well as of Edward VI., and that the term is well known to the law in that sense also.

Besides all this, is it reasonable for any one to be asked to pay a charge for the use of what is his own; this is what Dr. Kennedy did, when he charged any Shropshire boy for his education. The school and its revenues are theirs, (altogether in round numbers £3,200 per annum, besides the residences and school house), and therefore they should be taught free, let "*libera schola*" mean what it may; or on the other hand the masters should quit the premises, and teach their boarders some where else at their own discretion and cost, and let the Shropshire boys enjoy their own properties and revenues.

Having now shown the past and the present state of our endowed schools, I enter upon the consideration of what I conceive would be necessary reforms in their constitution for the future.

The most potent agency necessary to their reformation would be

## THE ELECTION OF THE TRUSTEES BY THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

This point gained, a multitude of beneficial alterations would follow. Each body of resident trustees would know what system of education would suit their own neighbourhood, and the people would be able to approach them as neighbours and friends.\*

The enemies of reform on this point, disdaining local rights, have sought in many cases to bring in distant trustees, knowing from experience how trusts in some places have been wrested from the poor, and given to the rich, by such unfair means; but they have been defeated in many instances where the inhabitants saw through, and opposed, such transparent attempts to destroy the rights of the residents and the poor.

The co-elective system,† which is now almost general, produces too often, slothful trustees, and classical-clerical masters; and where the funds are large, a preference for stranger boarders is given, in opposition to the sons of the parishioners.

In another point, one of the worst results of co-elective trusteeships is, that the foundation boys are too often restricted to the original number, or have been reduced.

Hundreds of such cases are to be met with. Take St. Paul's school, London, founded by the great Dean Colet, in 1509.

The original number of 153‡ scholars is still adhered to, although

\* When I visited the Charter House school in 1851, the trustees were—Her Majesty the Queen, the two English Archbishops, the Lord Chancellor of England, the Dukes of Wellington and Buccleuch, the Earls of Devon, Howe, and Ripon, the Bishop of London, Lord John Russell, Lord Denman, The Right Hon. Fox Maule, and Archdeacon Hale. How can the people grapple with such exalted trustees, or force them to bring about a reformation of this much abused foundation?

† At Harrow although the Founder, John Lyon, ordered that the trustees of the school should be parishioners, not one of the Governors reside therein now.

‡ The number mentioned in the Gospel narrative of the miraculous draught of fishes. This school is famous for its first master being the first teacher of Greek in England.

the school revenue has increased ten fold (*i.e.*, to £7,000), and these 153 scholars are all sons of the upper classes, who are so poor in spirit, as to get the education of their children free of cost with the exception of their books. This is a case that may be recommended to the notice of the Commissioners who say that fees ought invariably to be paid in endowed schools.

In fact, the limitation of the number of scholars on foundations, where there was formerly no limitation, as at Kidderminster, has become quite common. Thus large funds are paid to masters for doing little or nothing, as for instance at Rugby (see page xx, *ante*), where there are but seventy boys taught for about £6,400, or £90 per annum for each day boy's education !

#### SCHOOL FEES.

The second point in this Reform is that of school fees. The Commissioners and their Inspectors have a crotchet in their heads that fees should be paid, because that which costs nothing is but lightly esteemed ; yet they say that the teaching of the classics is essential in these schools above all things, and they order the classical teaching not to be paid for ! Thus the truth of the adage is singularly established, that "none are so blind as those who will not see."

Fees are of course necessary where the fund of a foundation school are too little to pay the instructors, but where it is more than ample, as at Wolverley, and many other places, how ridiculous it is to lay on penny and two-penny weekly fees. In the case of Wolverley, perhaps to save their consciences, the Trustees have, despite of the Commissioners free-from-payment-classical-crotchet, laid a fee on the upper school boys of one half-penny per week for the aid of Missionaries !

Thus one inconsistency leads on to another ; they charge the upper school boys parents, who are possessed of good means, one half-penny per week for purposes unconnected with the school, whilst they charge artisans and labourers four times the amount, to augment an exchequer already overflowing !

This is about as consistent as charging fees for National

School scholars in small towns, as at Brewood, where there is a richly endowed school, from which the poor boys who fill the National School, and for whom the endowed school was founded, are shut out.

But the Trustees are not always to blame; in some instances they cannot move in the right direction, because the two London Boards of Commissioners will not let them. Thus at Kidderminster, two years have nearly elapsed since the decease of the last head master, and no successor has been appointed; a second master with only ten scholars at the present moment, occupy a splendid school-room, and the foundation fund accumulating, whilst there are five rate-aided schools in the town, in which fees are levied upon every scholar. If this is not an example of "how not to do it;" perhaps the London Board will say what it really is.

The third point is

#### THE TEACHING OF THE CLASSICS.

This is, and has been not only the greatest evil, but the cause of many of the other evils attached to endowed schools. Because the Heads of the Universities wished to keep, not the education of the people, but the educational funds belonging to the people, in their own hands, they adopted a declaration, that in all these schools the classics should alone be taught free of charge, and that any and every other of the branches of education, should not be taught unless fees were paid therefor.

The reasons for adopting this unparalleled resolution were many; first to fill the Universities with boys who were taught the classics in foundation schools where unto scholarships were attached; this being the readiest and surest way to increase their University stipends; second, to ensure the employment of M.A.'s and B.A.'s alone in these schools, as but few laymen understand Greek and Latin; and third, to throw discredit upon scientific and commercial studies, which they themselves not comprehending, were ashamed to acknowledge their incapability of teaching.

But to make sure of this deeply laid plan as to securing the



money object, they also, in conjunction with the schoolmasters at the various endowed schools, set up by degrees what is called "the Classical Standard," and thus shut out all other studies, (all or any of which are of far greater value to the people at large) from sharing the advantages of free education, lodging, and table, at the Universities, and confined all scholarships, fellowships, and other beneficial offices in the Universities to the classical test. Thus they shut out all other studies, and laughed to scorn the various founders orders as to the rights of poverty, and the equity and desirability of a general education.

By these means they formed an association of the upper classes, which absorbed all the offices in Church and State, and bound themselves together as teachers, visitors, and examiners of the endowed educational establishments of the nation, in order to keep possession thereof.

The domination arising from this was so powerful, that its combination crushed out all opposition. Thus the worship of inutility became paramount; and the pedant rule that,

The languages, especially the dead;

All sciences, especially the abstruse;

The arts, at least all such as could be said,

To be the most remote from common use,

inclosed the endowed educational funds, meant to be used for the good of all, within the narrow boundaries of arrogance and selfishness, and thus uselessness in the future life of the scholars grew out of the barren study of the classics, by means of what has been styled by one of themselves, who has had courage enough to say so, "a costly juggle."

It was left to a Frenchman to propose, that in place of the classics, one living language should be taught in all places devoted to education, from the day school up to the University; well would it have been for Great Britain, if this had been proposed and carried out by our ecclesiastical schoolmasters. The commercial world would have had a grand opportunity of extending its ramifications, and our youths would not have had to lose their best years in studying the dead languages. These in fact, after all

need not be studied, as each work written by the ancient authors can be had, translated into and published in the English language for a trifle.

THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT,

passed on the 2nd of August, 1869, is important as a commencement of the reform of these institutions. It is tentative, and will expire either on the 31st of December, 1872, or on the same date in 1873. But it is deficient in not including all the Cathedral schools in its operations.

Mr. Forster, its promoter, in an admirable speech at Leeds, said :

“ It had been his especial business lately, to see how far the endowed schools of the country could be made good schools. The endowments were intrusted to the State by those who granted them, and, therefore, the State would fail in its duty if it did not see that these endowments were properly used. The same might be said with regard to the Universities, with their magnificent endowments. It was the duty of the State to turn them into great national institutions, to which all classes and all creeds could have access. He found that *in the administration of these endowments there had been too much forgetfulness of the poor, and too much remembrance of the rich.*”

It will be seen by this that he omitted all mention of the Cathedral schools, although the Rev. Mr. Whiston, and others exerted themselves to get them included.

Its first chief clause is the tenth. This gives power to the Commissioners to alter the constitution of any body of Trustees. II. This preserves the rights of education in particular areas as intended by the founders. XII. This gives power to include girls. XIV. This provides that no endowment shall be meddled with, (unless with the trustees consent), which has been established within the previous fifty years; that no Cathedral endowment should be included under the powers of this act, unless the Dean and Chapter consent; nor with schools belonging to Quakers or Moravians; nor with any exhibition bequeathed directly to the

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. XVII. This admits persons as trustees without regard to their religious views. XVIII. This removes all restrictions as to the schoolmasters being required to be in holy orders. XX. Gives the Commissioners power to abolish school Visitors. XXI. Abolishes the power of licensing the schoolmasters. XXII. Grants the power in each Scheme to dismiss the schoolmasters. XXVII. This gives the Commissioners power to call on the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to increase, where necessary, the funds of Cathedral grammar schools out of Cathedral revenues.

The after clauses give the Commissioners power to alter old and make new schemes; to transfer useless charities to educational uses; to get information by private or public Inquiries; grants to trustees the power to submit schemes for the Commissioners sanction; and orders all schemes to be printed, published and circulated for the information of all persons interested.

It will be apparent from the foregoing, that every proceeding vested in the Commissioners and springing from this Act, could be transacted much better by local trustees, *elected by the people*; and in addition, there would be the advantage of the avoidance of all the appeals and red tape routine.

The omission too of the Seven Public and the Cathedral schools from the powers given in this act, makes it miserably imperfect. These schools being the principal ones should be placed at the head of the Reform, to make it worthy of the name. Dr. Temple expressed a hope with all his heart, that the Public Schools would be included in the Bill, but not one Cathedral body uttered a wish on the question, while the Bill was before the Country and the Parliament. No! like dogs in the manger, they will neither improve their schools themselves, nor let others improve them.

There cannot be a shadow of doubt, about these miappropriations being based on the love of money. The *Daily Telegraph*, so far back as 1864, said on this point, very truly :

“It may be a very vulgar announcement to make, considering the dignity and solemnity of the awful magnates of Public

Schools; but we are confident that the real struggle with them will be on questions of money."

Do these powerful persons imagine, that these large per-versions will be allowed to remain, because they are crystallized at the present moment in Acts of Parliament? Do they rely upon possession being nine points of the law? if so the collapse will be terrific, as the people will not continue to pay rates for their own childrens' education, whilst they see and know through the Press, that they are deliberately deprived by the upper classes of these foundations. Their Board of Commissioners, drawn from the highest in the land, their travelling inspectors who coincide too much with the present state of things, their confederates in the Universities and Cathedrals, will avail nought when the people declare their determination to have their own endowed educational institutions restored to them.

#### THE NON-APPOINTMENTS OF CLERICAL MASTERS,

is essential to the progress of endowed schools; in fact, the offices of schoolmaster and clergyman are quite incompatible, and the laggard progress of their scholars sets a bad example to education generally, and thus hinders the consummation of their own public prayer in favour of seminaries of sound learning and religious education.

#### THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT,

was passed on the 9th of August, in this year. It provides for school accommodation to the full extent, for all children where there is any deficiency; for the formation of School Boards, for no catechism or religious formulary, of any denomination to be taught in any elementary school; and for a body of not less than three managers to act on behalf of the School Board in the management of each school.

Fees are to be paid, unless the parents are unable from poverty to do so. Schools may be entirely free from fees, if the Education Department are satisfied that the inhabitants are too poor to pay any. Industrial schools may also be established—

members of the School Boards are to be elected by the burgesses in Boroughs, and in parishes by the rate-payers. Boards to consist of from five to fifteen members—Officers may be appointed by the Boards, (if they think fit), to see to the compulsory attendance of children at school. The Rating Authorities to pay all deficiencies of the school expenses out of the local rates. The School Boards may publish their accounts in any local newspaper if they think fit. Public Inquiries to be held as to the school management, by appointment of the education department. Children from five to thirteen years of age to attend these schools.

This Act is too permissive in its powers, but as it can only live for two or three years, and has not yet come into active existence, the public will be able to pronounce as to its operations in that time, and take proper steps to improve upon it.

To shew in a concise form that the Deans and Chapters, have neglected to pay the scholars their equitable shares of the cathedral revenues I have compiled the following table. In addition to this I have cast up the total gross incomes of the endowed schools unattached to Cathedrals, which amounts to £395,449 per annum,\* and to these and the Cathedrals must be added, the incomes of the two head Universities of £750,000 per annum! what an immense sum this would make, and what a little is done for it.

*Sums devoted by the Deans and Chapters to the Cathedral Schools in England and Wales, showing the comparative amounts paid to them in 1542, and the average amounts for three years, ending in 1861-2-3, or 1862-3-4, and the amounts legally due.*

Names of Cathedrals.	Expenses of each School in 1642.			Average expenses in 3 years 1861-2-3, or 1862-3-4.			The School was legally entitled to.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Bangor ... ..	No School								
Bath & Wells...	No School								
Canterbury (1)	230	0	0	617	0	3	1876	7	2
Carlisle... (2)	13	6	8	No foundation Scholars.					

*Vide*, Vol. xxi, School's Inquiry Commissioners Reports.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Chester... (3)	131	6	8	277	13	0	941	12	0
Chichester (4) no school									
Durham... (5)	76	13	4	527	0	0	2150	0	0
Exeter ... (6) no school									
Ely ... (7)	104	13	4	340	0	0	2017	0	0
Gloucester & Bristol (8)	40	0	0	102	1	10*	751	0	0
Hereford no school									
Lichfield (9) no school									
Lincoln (10) no school									
Llandaff no school									
London (11) no school									
Manchester no school									
Norwich no school									
Oxford (12) no school									
Peterborough	104	13	4	400	0	0	754	0	0
Ripon no school									
Rochester (13)	99	18	6	688	6	8	1180	0	0
St. Asaph no school									
Westminster (14)	192	0	0	1397	6	1†	11317	0	0
Winchester (15) no school									
York no school									
Worcester (16)	Would not make any return to the Commissioners.								
St. David's	Ditto			ditto					
Salisbury	Ditto			ditto					

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\* For the year 1834.

† Average Seven years, ending 1834.

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ERROR.

Page xix. *ante*, line 14, the words *at Eton*, should follow the word *Oppidans*.

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## ERRORS.

- Page 2, line 17, gentlemen, should be *gentleman*.  
 Page 25, line 13, low very price, should be *very low price*.  
 Page 102, head line, Clapton, should be *Clopton*.



GOING TO MARKETS  
AND  
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS,  
BEING A SERIES OF  
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL RECORDS AND SKETCHES  
OF FORTY YEARS,  
SPENT IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES,  
FROM  
1830 TO 1870.

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CHAPTER I.

An autobiography—pray what is that ?  
A portrait of one who to himself sat ;  
'Twere better if he had sat to another,  
We see not ourselves as seen by a brother,  
Our faults and perfections are much better known,  
To other men's eyes than to eyes of our own.

HAVING been on a visit, a rather long one, to my sister Ann's who lived in Red Lion Street, Holborn, and not knowing what to do with myself on my return, I took to reading, in the which I was very kindly aided by a neighbour who had a pretty good variety of books ; he lived close to my father's, in Edgbaston Street, Birmingham, and encouraged me to read all the books he had, instead of idling about.

The greatest favour in this respect, was getting the loan every week of "Aris's Gazette," as newspapers at that period were dear and consequently scarce ; in this I revelled—I read

every word of it, but always turned eagerly to the theatrical performances, or rather to the criticisms thereon, and to the parliamentary debates.

The cause of this was, when I was in London I had seen Edmund Kean perform (with other actors of fame),—he was my principal star in the theatrical firmament; and I had heard Lord Stanley speak in the House of Commons, and he was my principal star in the political sphere.

The first time that I had a desire to get admittance to the gallery of the House of Commons, my sister's husband gave me a letter of introduction to Sir Francis Burdett, requesting the favor of an order. I went off to his house in Spring Gardens with great elasticity of spirits, as my highest ambition was to see the members and to hear them debate.

On arriving at Spring Gardens I was puzzled as to finding the house, there being no number on the letter, so I asked a tall thin gentleman if he could tell me in which house Sir Francis lived. He pointed to the house and passed on; I knocked rather nervously at the door, and the person that opened it asked me (on presenting the letter) if I had not met a tall gentleman going from the door, to which I replied that I had. "Then" said he, "that was Sir Francis himself, why did you not give him the letter?" I replied that I had no knowledge of him. I was quite chapfallen, which the butler perceiving, asked me if I could tell him what the letter was about, this I did very eagerly, and he told me if I was anxious to go to the House that evening he would advise me to call after four o'clock, and in the meantime he would ask Sir Francis to leave the order with him, should he go out again before that hour.

With many thanks to him I turned homewards again, betwixt hope and fear. I blamed myself very much for having stopped on the way for some time admiring Punch and Judy in the street, which had I not done I should have found Sir Francis at home, and not now have been left in the uncertainty of getting to the House in the evening.

However, on my second arrival at Spring Gardens at the appointed hour, I found that my kind adviser (the butler) had got the order, and I went on my way with a much lighter heart from Sir Francis's house than when I approached it.

That night I heard a warm debate, in which Lord Stanley was very prominent, but yet I was not satisfied, as many of the members were dull speakers, a thing I little expected, as I thought they were all men of learning and eloquence.

I forget whether Drury Lane or Covent Garden was the first theatre I entered in London, but be it one or the other, I do not forget, nor never shall, that Edmund Kean performed *Richard III.* in his best style. I was entranced and horrified to such an extent that I could sleep but little that night, and he kept possession of my mind for many days after, even amidst the bustle and new scenes (to me) of London.

After a stay of twelve months in London I returned to Birmingham, and having pretty well exhausted my friend's library I became very restless; I wanted to be employed at something or other, and resolved to study the advertising columns of the *Gazette*, in search of some occupation that would put an end to my idleness. Day after day, or rather week after week, as each Monday came round did I eagerly hasten to my friend's house to read the advertisements,—but no help came—all was blank, and had it not been for a very hot turmoil in the town between some of the inhabitants and the governors of the grammar school as to its management, which took my attention even at that early age, I should have gone off with a strolling party of players then in the town, who were bound for Wolverhampton as their next stage.

The most prominent names in the question of reforming the grammar school were those of Parkes and Pare, the one a lawyer, the other a tobacconist in New Street. The foundation income then was about £3,000 per annum. The school stood next to the Hen and Chickens Hotel, in New Street. The small number of boys in, and the exclusion of working men's sons from the school formed the chief matters of complaint; the number

was very few, especially under the head master, and they were all admitted by the sole favor of the Trustees. The head master received £400, the second £300, and the third and fourth £200 each; the head master, Mr. Cooke, limited his number of boys to 15, and 100 more were taught by the other masters. During the previous 30 years, only 10 boys had gained exhibitions.

A Board of Commissioners visited the school for the purpose of investigation; they found that a sum of money, £190, was due to the school by the Street Commissioners, and a much larger sum was owing by the Trustees of the new burial ground, viz: £1,900; these were ordered to be paid in at once, and the Commissioners said with regard to the Secretary to the Trust (who had been in office seven years,) that "they found it difficult to reconcile, with the knowledge his office must confer upon him, his ignorance that so large a debt still remained due from the burial ground trustees."

This state of things altogether produced a great deal of ill will—the cries in the streets were various—"Down with the Tory Church Trustees." "Turn old Cooke out that flogs the boys so badly." "The two P's, Parkes and Pare for ever." "Who were the robbers of the poor boys for 120 years?" (The old school that was taken down in 1832, was built in 1707.) "Where is Millward's Red Lion Inn,—who swallowed that?" "Who gave it to a cousin? why one of the trustees." "Who pockets the Henn's farm fines?" "Why the masters."

To make these cries intelligible to the present generation, it is necessary to state the circumstances which gave birth to them. The Trustees were all Churchmen and Tories, every other religious denomination, and every other class of politicians were rigidly excluded by the existing Trustees, or Governors, as they were called, they having in their own power the right of filling up any vacancy that occurred. The head master, Mr. Cooke, was so notorious for flogging the boys severely that he was called "Cooke, the butcher." Mr. Parkes and Mr. Pare were the leaders of those who sought by legal means to get the whole

thing reformed. No artizan's or mechanic's sons had been admitted to the school for a very long period, and the sore feeling on this point may be inferred from the facts that no fewer than seven thousand of these classes signed petitions to both Houses of Parliament against the management, and for a re-construction of the school system, and upon the cessation of the proceedings, £750 were ordered to be paid out of the school funds to the promoters of the reformation of the school towards their costs.

The Red Lion Inn (supposed to have been situated in Deritend,) was a part of the properties left by Mr. Millward for the use of the school, but from some unaccountable cause this was lost to the school, and even the site of the house cannot be recollected; and the fines levied upon every renewal of the lease of the farm upon Camp Hill, called Henn's, were pocketed by Cooke, the head master, instead of being placed in the Treasurer's hands. In fact every thing was wrong, and the rage of the working classes was very much increased against both the trustees and masters, when the Board of Commissioners discovered and exposed the many irregularities and omissions committed by those who should have been the guardians of the school revenues, and the fosterers of the education of poor men's sons.

During the heat of the battle a translation of the "School Charter of Edward VI." was published for public sale; this showed that the Trustees were appointed to act for the best interests of the boys, especially as to seeing that the masters did their duty fairly, whereas the latter did just as they liked, and the Trustees nominated the sons of their relatives and friends alone for admittance to the school.

But to return to my own position. One burning hot Monday in July, 1830, an advertisement appeared in the *Gazette*; it ran thus: "Wanted, a junior clerk in an office—apply, by letter, \*\*\*\* letter-box at post office." I read it over and over again, putting questions to myself thus,—was I not too young, was I sufficient scholar for any sort of clerkship, and what would the wages be? However, I consulted the authorities at home, and my friendly

neighbour, and every one said "try;" and my other sister who had taught me all I had learnt up to that moment, procured a sheet of the very best note paper (there were no envelopes then), and a brand new quill pen for my use on the occasion.

I sat down with a distracted mind as to how I should begin, and what I should say; I drew out a rough draft and submitted it to every member of the family; it was altered by one and the other, until it was as unlike the original, as Sir John Falstaff was unlike himself, when he was dressed in women's clothes and turned out of Ford's house.

But it was finished at last, and I took it to the post office, nearly opposite to the theatre, with very much hesitation. I cogitated as to who the box could belong to at the post office. I peeped through the window, but was no wiser; I was half resolved to ask the lady in the office who the box belonged to, but that was too much for my pluck, so I resolved to go up to the Crescent and scan the offices, to see if I could guess at the most likely from which the advertisement had been issued, but it was all in vain, so I sauntered back again down Paradise Street, and past the gardens and fields in New Street, to the post office again. Here I stopped a long time to watch the various persons that fetched letters, hoping to catch a sight of mine, but as many of the messengers brought leather bags to carry the letters in, I had to give it up.

The next morning I tried the same experiment with the same result, and sick at heart I turned homewards once more. Day after day went on, and I had all but given up hope, when on the tenth day a letter came addressed to myself, requesting me to call, and naming the office. Then joy filled my heart; I read it over and over again, but my wise sister told me not to crow till I was out of the wood,—not to make sure of getting the place lest a disappointment should follow.

The handwriting of the letter was very indifferent, and it was very curt, so much so that I thought the situation could be no great thing, but these thoughts were soon put aside for the more

important considerations of getting my hair cut, and putting on my Sunday suit.

At last I was prepared, and I asked my sister to accompany me, to which she consented so far as to go to the outside of the office, but on no account to enter it; to this I rather reluctantly consented and away we went.

The office was a good match for the letter,—one room down stairs, in which there was but one clerk, who told me upon showing him the letter, to go up stairs: this I did with a palpitating heart and uncertain step. I knocked at the door, and was told by a voice to "Come in." On entering I found a gentleman who was very plainly dressed, sitting at a table that was smothered with papers, whilst round about him on the floor were letters, some folded up and some open. I presented his letter addressed to myself, and he looked straight at me, and asked if I could give him a reference as to my character and ability. I told him that I could, and he replied, "Tell me who is thy reference." I was rather staggered at the word "thy" but immediately gave him the name of a gentleman that knew me well; he then told me he would write to him and let me know on receiving his reply. Thus instead of being appointed at once I was thrown into a state of incertitude again—hope deferred, for the first time was gnawing at my heart. I walked homewards in a troubled state of mind, I thought I should have had a "yes" or a "no" at once, yet I felt relieved by reflecting that I had been in the advertiser's presence, and that I was so far sure of gaining the situation. I said to myself "I wonder how many have been summoned to his presence; perhaps their references will be superior to mine; perhaps their experience and ability are superior," and I resolved to return and watch to see if any other youths came to the office.

I waited and walked to and fro with bated breath, every step that sounded as coming round the corner, (the office was at a corner) took my instant attention, but all passed on without even noticing the office door, much more entering it.

My dinner time was forgotten in my anxious waiting and watching the comers to the office, and it was not until my

appetite compelled me to submit, that I turned my face homewards. As I sauntered along I communed with myself, as to being so selfish and anxious, about a matter over which I had no control, and I wished I had returned home to dinner at the proper time, and then back to watch the office, for who could tell but that some more fitting youth would go to the office during my absence and succeed in his application; and yet I thought, how could I know the result, even if a hundred had passed in and out, and sick of the debate with myself, my mind reverted to the travelling play-actors, and I wished I was with them.

There was something so glorious to my mind in rambling from town to town and performing before a multitude of strange faces. I recollected the plaudits in the London theatre, when I sat there during Kean's performance of *Richard III.*, and I wished to be a second Kean! I believe that Providence affects our minds in these matters, and that with all the doubtfulness clinging around the pursuit of the bent of our desires when young, it may well be said—

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends  
Rough-hew them how we will."

I also believe that if we were to pursue these inoculations, we should do right in one way or the other,—that is, we should either succeed by practice and experience in our pursuit, or retire under a deep conviction of our unfitness, and seek another for which we should be more fit.

And yet after many, many years of a truly varied life, I feel the truth of Gifford's words:—

"Oh for the good old times! when all was new,  
And every hour brought prodigies to view;  
Our sires in unaffected language told,  
Of streams of amber and of rocks of gold:  
Full of their theme, they spurned all idle art  
And the plain tale was trusted to the heart.  
Now all is changed! We fume and fret, poor elves,  
Less to display our subject than ourselves;  
Whate'er we paint,—a grot, a flower, a bird,  
Heavens, how we sweat! laboriously absurd!"



Words of gigantic bulk and uncouth sound,  
The rattling tirades in long sentence bound ;  
While points with points, with periods periods jar,  
And the whole work seems one continued war !"

Of course it took some days before I could expect any further commands as to the situation ; just then my cousins George and William Wilson having heard of the matter called to congratulate me thereon : they wished they had such a prospect instead of being as they were, scholars at the detestable grammar school. George declared and vowed that so soon as he left to go to business he would way-lay the third master (Mr. Clay), who had so often and so cruelly beaten him, and pay him off with a sound cud-gelling, whilst William offered to join him if he would help him to do the same good office on the corpus of the second master (Mr. Kennedy). As to the head master (Mr. Cooke), they did not say anything, and this is the universal course with school boys ; the Ushers are their special antipathies, and so head masters, even if they are very severe, escape.

Such a trio as the three masters of this school could scarcely be equalled ; the head master did not confine his punishing propensities to his own boys, but would often invade the second master's ground, and thrash away ; and to make amends to the wounded feelings of the second master, he would also carry out his brutal taste by thrashing those of the third master with equal gusto.

The second master followed the example of the premier, and not only did he use his fist in his passion, but his language was disgusting.

The third master of course followed suit, but he was the worst of all,—particularly when the other masters were absent, and he seemed to enjoy it, for after giving his brutal floggings he would chuckle and laugh. His chief delight was to hold a boy by the hair of his head down to his desk with one hand, whilst he beat the boy on his face. No wonder that the boys were continually playing truant, and coming to school at very irregular hours, when they had such cruel masters over them.

And so my cousins told me all their troubles, and wished they were going into an office, however arduous the duties might be.

The much desired reply came at last, and I hastened with a palpitating heart to the office. The gentleman said my reference was sufficient, and that if I could be ready by the next Monday week that would do; but to my great astonishment he said that the situation was in Worcestershire, and that if I would call on Saturday he would give me instructions where to go to, and money to pay my fare.

Up to the Saturday morning I was in a great bustle, everything was wanted, and everything was procured for my comfort: new clothes, linen, shoes, hat, and a new trunk. I was ready in due time on the Monday, and on this occasion my father went with me to the office; the place was named and the business, but the wages were to be fixed by the gentleman's brother, who was his partner; the office I was going to being the head quarters of the trade carried on by them.

From that Saturday morning up to the day of starting was a memorable period in my life. I went to see all my relations, and was over-whelmed with kindnesses. I never found them so kind before. I also called upon the friend who had enabled me to feed my mind on his books, and he generously offered me the choice of any book in his library; this I accepted as a real token of his approbation and esteem, much more so than if he had given me gold and silver, for at that period money was only pleasant to me for the purposes of procuring books, and going to the theatre when any great player came to town. At that time the charge to the pit was two shillings and sixpence and when I could muster that sum, there I resorted.

The eventful morning came, my trunk and myself were safely lodged on the "Red Rover," and away we went. I thought the coachman was a very reckless driver, and at every stage he became more so, under the influence of repeated doses of rum and milk.

Nevertheless, even with the fear of an upset, how pleasant it is to travel on a road you have never seen before,—everything is

new—houses, scenery, roads running off right and left, and on this road, through Dudley and Stourbridge, a double novelty presented itself in so many furnaces being at work, and so many chimneys vomiting forth volumes of blaze which kept the eyes on perpetual duty.

The people, too, were very peculiar, their blackened clothing and stalwart forms astonished me; they seemed to be very merry, throwing out their jokes at the coachman, whose red face in their opinions gave the name of Red Rover to the coach.

When we arrived at Kidderminster we saw a very different class of men: thin and pale, and stooping in their gait; no doubt this was owing to their trade of weaving. Here the horses were changed and we dashed off to the town I was bound to, over a hill or two, but on a much more picturesque road than any we had seen since we started. The pleasure was heightened when we passed over the beautiful river Severn, and, when the coachman pulled up at the Wheat Sheaf Inn at Bewdley, I alighted.

It happened singularly enough, that in this small town I should on my arrival see for the first time a Member of Parliament being "chaired." At Birmingham no member had been elected, although so large a town, whilst here with about four thousand population there was a real representative. The people had no voice in the matter, the Bailiff and twelve Capital Burgesses alone were the electors, and they took the trouble and turmoil off the householders' hands.

Whilst I stood staring at the novel sight of the Member being carried on men's shoulders in a chair, which was fastened on barge oars, the coach went on its way to Tenbury, and on turning round I found that my top coat and trunk, too, were gone to Tenbury.

Here was a nice beginning! I spoke to the innkeeper and he told me not to be disquieted, as no doubt the trunk and coat would be brought back the next day, on the return of the coach; but how could I help being disquieted at the prospect of losing all my worldly goods? Again my sight-loving propensities were censured; again and again did I lament my thoughtlessness,

but there was nothing for it but to submit, so I consoled myself by pulling out my letter and inquiring the way to my place of employment.

"It is over the bridge," said the innkeeper, "between the large warehouses and the chapel." I soon found it, but the master was away, and the salesman told me that he had been instructed to find out some one that could let me have lodgings. This he had done and he took me to the house, and left me to make my bargain with the mistress. She was a short thin person, and her husband, a tailor, was a lusty tall man; the bargain was soon made, and the salesman kindly asked me, on my return to the warehouses, to partake of some food and beer. He lived in a house close to the place, and his mother and sister lived with him. After I had satisfied my appetite, which had been almost extinguished by my grief at the trunk and coat misfortune, he took me to the office; it was composed of two rooms, the windows overlooking the church, or chapel yard, as it was more generally called, and between the office and the church yard wall stood a pair of parish stocks, but these I am proud to say I never saw occupied.

The explanations as to what I should have to do being gone through, he took me to the warehouses, in which large quantities of corn were lodged; he told me that when I was old enough I should doubtless be sent occasionally to markets, that it would be necessary for me to learn how to keep the books first, and get a knowledge of the sorts and qualities of corn.

The business was a very large one; there was another establishment in Worcester, and the markets the various salesmen attended were numerous. To my surprise the hours were both early and late: six o'clock in the morning until eight at night, with two hours and a half allowed for breakfast, dinner, and tea times. The master himself was as punctual as clock-work at these hours, and sometimes stayed later at night to write his letters.

The next day to my great joy, my coat and trunk re-appeared, I thanked the coachman over and over again, and gave him a fee for his trouble.

I had but very little time on my hands to see the neighbourhood except on Sundays and on the first I went to the parish church, a good mile distant from the town on the other side of the river ; it is called St. Leonard's, and was erected in Norman times ; this saint was the patron of locksmiths and captives, and a great protector of geese and ducks. An ancient writer addressed him as to his protection of geese and ducks as follows :—

“With blessings of St. Germaine  
I will me so determyne,  
That neither fox nor vermyne  
Shall do my chyckens harme,  
For your geese sake, St. Leonarde,  
And for your duckes, St. Leonarde,  
There is no better charme.

Between his four-fold patronage he must have had a busy time of it.

The name of Bewdley has been stated to be a corruption of the Norman words *Beau lieu*, but seeing that there are so many parishes on the borders of the Severn terminating with the syllable *ley*, which meant in old times *field*, this must be a mere fanciful notion. There are Apley, Highley, Alveley, Arley (upper and lower), Martley, Shrawley, Suckley, Shelsley, Ombersley, and Witley, all adjoining, or nearly so, down the river, on either bank. These must have taken their names from some ancient owner, to which the word *field*, meaning his property, was added.

I was much pleased with the town. The footpaths were all flagged, whilst those at Birmingham were paved with what are called “petrified kidneys.” There was a substantial Town Hall and covered market place, whilst at Birmingham the market was held on stalls in the open streets from Nelson's Monument to the bottom of Union Street.

The town was anciently in Wales, but was made part of Worcestershire by Henry VIII. It had long been the centre for landing grain and groceries from Bristol for the whole district, and in short it was a very busy and flourishing place.

The cap, tanning, and horn comb trades were the principal industries, to which were added a large dry-saltery and vitriol works. Three coaches passed to and fro daily, and market wherries passed up and down the river on set days.

But the chief charm to me was its ancient history; it was formerly one of the Towns of Refuge, to which there were four gates to lock up the town at night; one of these gates being attached to the prison, which was built on the centre of the bridge, and commanded the English side of the country.

It was also famous for being the town where Prince Arthur and Catherine of Arragon were married by proxy (at the Palace of Tickenhill) in 1501. Queens Mary and Elizabeth also lived here during their youth. Other persons of note lived at Ribbesford Hall, near to the site of the ancient monastery and the parish church, the principal historical character being Sir Edward Herbert of Cherbury, who was a writer, a scholar in six languages, and a warrior of great prowess.

On my first perambulation, for which I got a half-day's holiday, I visited the grammar school; it was in the Park and was conducted by a clergyman and an usher, the former having the education of ten boarding scholars, in addition to his aiding, in conjunction with the usher, the teaching of forty day boys.

Carlisle tells us in his "History of Grammar Schools" that in former days the boys of Bewdley talked as commonly in Latin as in English. This must have been in the time when the church bell was rung at five o'clock in the morning to summon them to school. This bell-ringing was very obnoxious to the sleeping inhabitants, and drew on the ringers many denunciations, one in particular ran thus :—

" Ye rascally ringers, ye merciless foes,  
Who persecute every friend to repose;  
I wish for the quiet and peace of the land,  
You had round your necks what you hold in your hand."

I found at the school a free library of some two thousand volumes, which were bequeathed in 1819 by a clergyman to the care of the rector of the parish, and the master of the school,

for the use of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood. This was a very pleasant discovery to me, in fact, just what I wanted, as they were valuable works, far beyond my reach in purchasing.

Having taken a bird's eye view of the books and promised myself that I should be a frequent visitor at the library, I sauntered home to my lodgings.

When I told my landlord where I had been to, he remarked that the school lands were worth about some £130 yearly, £26 of which were only paid to the master, the corporation having at various periods let the properties on long leases (some even at 500 years) at very low rents, to benefit their friends and favorites, who in their turn sublet them to tenants.



## CHAPTER II.

"'Tis born with all : the love of nature's works  
 Is an ingredient in the compound man,  
 Infused at the creation of the kind.  
 And, though the Almighty Maker has throughout  
 Discriminated each from each, by strokes  
 And touches of his hand, with so much art  
 Diversified, that two were never found  
 Twins at all points, yet this obtains, in all,  
 That all discern a beauty in His works,  
 And all can taste them."

*Cowper.*

On the following Sunday afternoon I resolved to take a ramble through the Park and fields of Ribbesford. As I entered the Park, I passed near to Tickenhill Hall, once the site of Tickenhill Palace, built it is said by Henry VII. It was afterwards the property of Henry, eldest son of James I. An idea of its grandeur and extent at that time may be formed from the fact that the Park in which it was situated contained 400 acres of land and 3,500 trees. After the death of Charles I. the furniture was conveyed to London, and sold there with the furniture of eighteen other of the king's palaces.

The House and Park were in a great measure destroyed in the time of Cromwell, and the king's stables were unfortunately burnt down in 1730 or 1731.

I first began the practice of writing odd verses upon any particular place or circumstance, when I took these rambles in the parish of Ribbesford, not at that time with the intention of ever publishing anything, but merely to please myself. In reading Burns's life and poems, before I left home, I learned that he used to compose his pieces whilst following the plough, and afterwards to recite them to his brother before writing them down. I therefore adopted the plan of carrying a piece of paper and a pencil in my pocket and recording my feelings at once. Thus in time



my scraps increased so much, that I began to think of putting them into shape, and so my poem of Ribbesford was accomplished, bit by bit.

If it were the practice of those who feel original thoughts flashing from the brain, to record them at the moment of birth, how many a bright page would have lived to adorn English literature! especially as it is acknowledged that the English language has more breadth and power of expression than any other, either ancient or modern. And yet in comparison therewith, how little it is cultivated, even by those who live year after year in our Universities, surrounded with unequalled opportunities of study and association.

On my first ramble, whilst sitting on a stile, writing my verses, a farmer was passing by, who had often seen me at the desk when he called on business at my employers' office. He asked me what I was doing; I told him frankly, and many a time at market since then, even up to the present has he referred to it. Here are the lines:—

Here the fond mind may roam amidst the hills  
Blooming with perfumed blossoms, where the grass  
Bends graceful o'er the sides of gurgling rills  
And checks the rambling schoolboys as they pass;—  
Where birds as various in their notes as class,  
Pour forth their morning hymns on every spray,  
And flowers lie scattered, or in cluster'd mass,  
 wooing the breezes as they idly stray,  
Proclaiming to the world, 'nature's unequalled sway!  
  
Where the clear river wand'ring through the meads,  
Deck'd with green margin, slowly steals along,  
Murm'ring like devotee to pebbly beads,  
Whilst feeding with its waves the weedy throng,  
And the wild thrush pours forth his rapid song!  
Where nature binds within her beauteous zone  
All that is beautiful and bright and young,  
And draws around her ever spotless throne  
The thoughtless world, and thus to all her gifts makes known.  
  
And these lone joys soothed many a passing care,  
Aided by Hope's enticing picturings;

Oh, happy Hope, to all alike most fair!  
 Thy voice to gloomiest minds oft gayest sings,  
 And like dull poison soothes them whilst it stings;  
 For though thou deck'st Ambition's upward flight,  
 And Love's—Fame's,—Honour's, with the brightest wings,  
 And clothest darkest souls with dazzling light,  
 Full oft thou leavest them in dark despair's long night.

After this I wandered further on to Ribbesford Church, passing on my way through the avenues planted by Sir Edward Herbert (who lived at Ribbesford Hall) in illustration of the main body, the right and left wings, and the camp of an army. I passed the church, and in a field just above the churchyard I found a seat under a huge oak. Here I sat down again to gaze, having spread out before me Ribbesford Hall and meadows, with the oak of 900 years,\* the church and churchyard, the ruined walls of the Monastery (then forming part of the farm stables), and the Hermitage in Blackstone Rock, on the opposite side of the river,—here my pencil again flew out and I jotted down—

Here on this seat, sheltered by this old oak,  
 What fairy landscapes meet the ravish'd eye!  
 How every spot around aims to provoke  
 Supremacy in foliage, tint, and dye,  
 And the poor pen or pencil's powers defy;  
 Lost in astonishment, the human mind  
 Travels to beatific scenes on high,  
 And in mute adoration thanks the kind  
 And omnipresent God, that here such scenes we find.  
 Far, far, from me, be misanthropic guilt,  
 Far, far, each morbid, thankless, gloomy soul,  
 Whose hearts like his who human blood first spilt,  
 In ignorance curse the earth from pole to pole,  
 And 'gainst sweet nature their foul thunders roll;—  
 Who call this world "a howling wilderness,"  
 And death, to life like this, the happiest goal;  
 Who brightest scenes with their dark curtains dress,  
 And teach young minds to hate what God hath deigned to bless!

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\*" The monarch oak,

Three centuries he grows, and three he stays  
 Supreme in state, and in three more decays."

Whose stunted minds are shrouded with a gloom,—  
 A melancholy night that knows no day ;  
 Whose hopes and fears all centre in the tomb,  
 To deep dejection's power a constant prey ;  
 Or laden with continual dismay,  
 Convert this life, a heav'nly boon for all,  
 Into a curse, devoid of one bright ray ;  
 Who drink no draughts but wormwood mixed with gall,  
 And e'en when summer smiles, wear winter's mourning pall.

Say, should not e'en the smallest flower that grows,  
 Call forth our gratitude ? See where the hills,  
 With grandeur drest, 'midst smiling vales repose,  
 Whilst to the river chaunt the merry rills,  
 And plenteous autumn ev'ry garner fills :  
 Say, should not these and such like scenes beget  
 A happy frame of mind, to bear those ills  
 Which providentially our paths beset,  
 And lead us on to hope for brighter prospects yet.

Yes,—gloomy minds should live midst gloomy scenes,  
 Where barren crags with constant snows are crown'd,  
 Where the sun's power scarce ever intervenes,  
 Or arid deserts undisturb'd abound,  
 By cultivation and her blessings shunned :  
 But charms like thine, sweet Ribbesford ! proudly tell,  
 That for the happy mind there's plenteous ground ;  
 That he perverts his mind who seeks a cell,  
 Who dares to "merit heav'n by calling earth a hell."

On turning homeward I strolled by the river side ; this was a very favourite path with the inhabitants for a ramble in fine weather, and useful as the towing path for the barge trade on the river. Sometimes horses brought the barges up by means of long ropes fastened to their gearings, and sometimes men, the ropes being fastened to leathern straps which were braced round their chests.

In 1761, Bewdley petitioned Parliament, praying that vessels should be drawn by horses, as the men (of whom it took twenty to one vessel, at 2s. 6d. a day each, besides two meals and beer, for pulling one vessel to Bridgenorth, only fifteen miles) had become so unruly that the trade was much hindered.

Shortly after the period of which I am writing, the bow-halliers or men who drew the barges up the river, stopped the practice of using horses for this work ; they nailed the gates up along the towing paths, and assembled in great numbers to prevent any horses being attached to the vessels, and it was not until they were dispersed by soldiers, and some of them sent to prison, that they desisted.

There was another description of craft on the river, called trows. These were much larger than the barges, and were employed between Bristol and Bewdley, as the danger below Gloucester was too great for the smaller craft. This danger chiefly arose from the heavy tides, which at some periods of the year had a bore of three or four feet high ; and besides these, below Sharpness Point, the river was very wide and very unsafe in stormy weather. A custom ruled on board these vessels for the men to be fed, during their voyages, at the expense of their employers, the trow and barge owners. They were picked men that were employed on board the trows, tall, muscular, and of a sound age ; and what between their good food and rough work, were not to be despised in a quarrel.\*

There were many of these trowmen who, although their homes were at Bewdley and elsewhere, had the right of voting for the parliamentary candidates of Bristol, on a curious ground, viz., through having married Bristol women.

The explanation as to this right was as follows:—Queen Elizabeth when once on a visit to Bristol noticed that the females were remarkable for their ugliness, and on inquiry found that a great number of them were unmarried ; thereupon she ordered that any man who married a Bristol woman should have a vote for the city, whether he resided there or not. This it is averred soon emptied the Bristol market of spinsters, and the emigration of them when lawfully wedded was continuous, up to the time when the Reform Bill of 1832 came into operation.

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\* Bristol in ancient days had to pay a tax to Bewdley on every trading vessel that came from thence up the river Severn. When the tax was discontinued is not quite clear, but it is recorded that Bristol continued to petition Parliament against the impost, until it was abolished.

The Bristol females, like the patrons of rotten boroughs, were of course opposed to that Act being passed, and it was a question with great political sages at that time, whether it would not have been better for the happiness of the commonwealth in general, as well as for the domestic happiness of females in particular, that all boroughs should be entitled (under the threatened Bill) to the franchise through marriage, rather than through a £10 rental, which, of course, would leave the females out, and allow silly bachelor householders, as well as married householders, to be honoured with the rights and titles of electors, without the co-operation of the other sex.

The question of an extension of the franchise being on the carpet when I arrived at Bewdley, this right of many a resident therein was of course hotly debated, and in the parlours of the few public houses then in existence, (the Beer Bill not being passed till 1840) it formed a fine subject for discussion.

The only newspaper that came into the village where I lodged (which was on the opposite side of the river to Bewdley) was the weekly *London Standard* ;\* the resident lawyer took it in, and on every following Thursday night, after its arrival, it was allowed to be read in the parlour of the "Black Boy"† public house (better known to the aborigines as the "Blackee Boy") by the parish clerk, to those who could afford to be parlour customers.

He was a fine old man with very white hair and very red cheeks, and having for many years officiated at the baptisms, marriages, and funerals of the population, he was looked up to

\*"O avarice of words!

When thousand starving minds such manna seek,  
To drop the precious food but once a week.—*Crabbe*."

† The sign of the Black Boy is to be met with in various parts of the kingdom. Crabbe mentions it in his poem of "The Borough" thus :—

"Ye travellers all, superior inns denied  
By moderate purse, the low by decent pride;  
Come and determine,—will ye take your place  
At the full Orb, or half the lunar Face?  
With the Black Boy or Angel will ye dine?  
Will ye approve the Fountain or the Vine?"

as of high rank, in fact he was number three, the parson being number one, and the lawyer number two.

He was also very good humoured, and never so much so as when he was "unco fou." Of course Thursday night was the red-letter night of the week, as each husband was permitted by his wife to remain out longer than usual at the Black Boy, without any grumbling, because she had thereby the second edition of the news after the "gude" man's return home.

There was no doubt a little natural jealousy on the housewives' parts in this respect, as each one wished her husband to know as much about the state of the nation as her neighbour's husband, and also to know as much through the medium of her own husband, as any of the others.

Be that as it may, whilst the clerk read the *Standard*, he met with many interruptions, especially as to politics; and the chief new topic being the adoption of the £10 right to vote, in the expected Reform Bill, irrespective of the rights of the Bristol women, it was a very sore subject.

The rope maker that supplied many of the trow and barge owners with his manufacture, declared, that if the rights of the Bristol women were abolished by any new law, the trade on the river would not be worth a brass farthing, at which Mr. Green, the public warehouse-keeper, laughed and remarked that farthings were made of copper, and not of brass. The rope maker replied very hotly, he knew that as well as he did, and he knew also that unless the time-honoured connection was kept up between Bristol and Bewdley, Mr. Green's warehouse would not be wanted at all, "Aye" he exclaimed loudly "the Severn itself will not be wanted." "Very true" said the parish clerk, "and if the men on the river lose their trade, where are the marriages and births to come from?" This was a poser, as every man in the parlour felt, that if marriages and births ceased, there would be no more rising generations, and consequently no more trade.

There was one of the parlour customers who had kept very quiet up to this point, Mr. Jones, the carpenter. He now declared that they could not do better than emigrate in a body, when the

evil day came; and being a great reader, and fond of poetry, he favored the company with a recital of the gloomiest portion of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." Just as he had finished, the allotted hour for shutting up the inn arrived, and the neighbourly circle departed to their homes, in rather a moody, and perhaps rather a muddy state, and so ended this week's remarkable debate on the contents of the weekly *Standard*.

My employment became more and more pleasant every day. In the absence of the governor, as we called the master, and of the salesman at the various markets, which was almost constantly the case, I had to keep the books, and superintend the receiving and delivering of the grain and flour brought to, and sent from the warehouse. This was no trifle, but the variety of the task suited me. The trows and barges had to be unloaded, and the waggons and carts to be loaded, and many persons called daily to make purchases, so that I was kept actively employed. Everything was new to me, and the great quantity of traffic by the river, and the road, both of which the warehouses faced, made and kept me happy day after day. My wants providentially were few, my food was simple, and as to troubles, I had none.

The only studies I attended to in the evenings were books, and playing on my flute. At the house where I lodged another young man had lodgings also, and I tried to persuade him to buy a flute in order that we might play together, but he preferred the violin, so we tried to make harmony in that way. There arose, however, an impediment to our musical enjoyment, the mistress of the house objecting to the "noise" as she called it, and declared it made her head ache. She was very querulous and much older than her husband, who did not care how much we played, and as she had brought him some property, and no children, he was as happy as a man could be. Our only time for playing was at night, and she used to tell us that we ought to follow the adage:—

"After dinner sit a while,  
After supper walk a mile."

To this we demurred for two reasons : first, that we had no time to sit after dinner : secondly, that we had no time for our musical practice but at night, after business hours. She at last said, that if we persisted in playing at night we must get other lodgings, but as these were scarce, we promised to practice only on alternate nights. This seemed to meet her approbation, but my companion being wrath at her interference, proposed that we should get up early on alternate mornings, to revenge ourselves upon her. This made matters worse, and on the first morning she came up stairs, and told us that she would not put up with it, as it disturbed her morning rest. What was to be done ? give up our pleasant pursuit, or leave ? We resolved upon the latter, and on the same day engaged lodgings elsewhere in Bewdley, on the other side of the bridge, but not in the same house, as we could find no one that could accommodate two persons. Our landlady was very wrath when we gave her notice, and much more so when I played, and my companion sung, every evening we remained there, Burns's "*Joyful Widower*," "*The Tailor fell through the bed*," and other ditties upon the plagues of a bad temper, and an ungovernable tongue.

The Political Union was becoming very powerful at Birmingham during this time. George IV. was dead, and William IV. reigned in his stead. Revolutions at Paris and Brussels had taken place, which alarmed the English upper ten thousand. At home, the distress amongst the agricultural labourers drove them to incendiarism throughout the country, especially in the south ; every district had its public meetings, and the King even declined dining at Guildhall on the Lord Mayor's Day on account of the state of public feeling.

A new Parliament met on the 2nd of December, and the Whigs, after twenty three years of exclusion from office, were triumphant. It was a very critical time, poverty stalked through the land, subscriptions were raised in towns to find food for the poor, riots of a serious nature occurred in many places, and at our neighbouring town of Kidderminster disturbances arose on the question of low wages, and damage was done to the amount of £3,000.



I went over to Kidderminster after the riots to see the results. The windows showed how violently the people had acted, and business in consequence was at a stand still. In the course of my visit I learned that the feeling between masters and men was very bad ; in short, it amounted to perfect hatred on both sides.

The clerk who preceded me at the office where I was employed, had kept a canoe on the river, and having removed to Birmingham, where there is only the muddy stream called the Rea, he had now no use for it. One evening whilst my companion and I were admiring it, he asked me why I did not buy it. I immediately took the hint and wrote to the owner, and asked his intentions as to keeping or selling the tiny craft, and by return of post he offered it to me at a low very price.

The purchase was made under conditions that I should pay the amount by instalments, as my exchequer was not overflowing with cash. This opened up a new enjoyment to me, and every fine morning found me up at day break, rowing away down the river as far as Ribbesford meadows, where I enjoyed that most healthful of all exercises, swimming.

Rowing back one beautiful May morning I cast anchor in the middle of the river, opposite Winterdyne House, which stands on an elevation of some eighty feet, surrounded with walks so numerous, and intricate, that it is very difficult to find the way out without a guide.

I felt so happy whilst sitting in my boat, that I pulled out my paper and pencil to record my rapture, thus—

Hail ! lovely scene where nature decks the earth,  
And blithely ev'ry feather'd songster sings ;  
Where milk-maids chaunt responsive to their mirth,  
And the rich orchard forth its blossoms flings ;  
Where the meek daisy o'er the landscape springs,  
And cultured gardens all their stores unfold,  
Whilst giddy butterflies on zephyr wings  
Display their many-coloured coats of gold,  
Enticing truant boys where they had never strolled.  
Phœbus now slakes his thirst in Severn's stream,  
The winds far o'er the hills have fled away ;

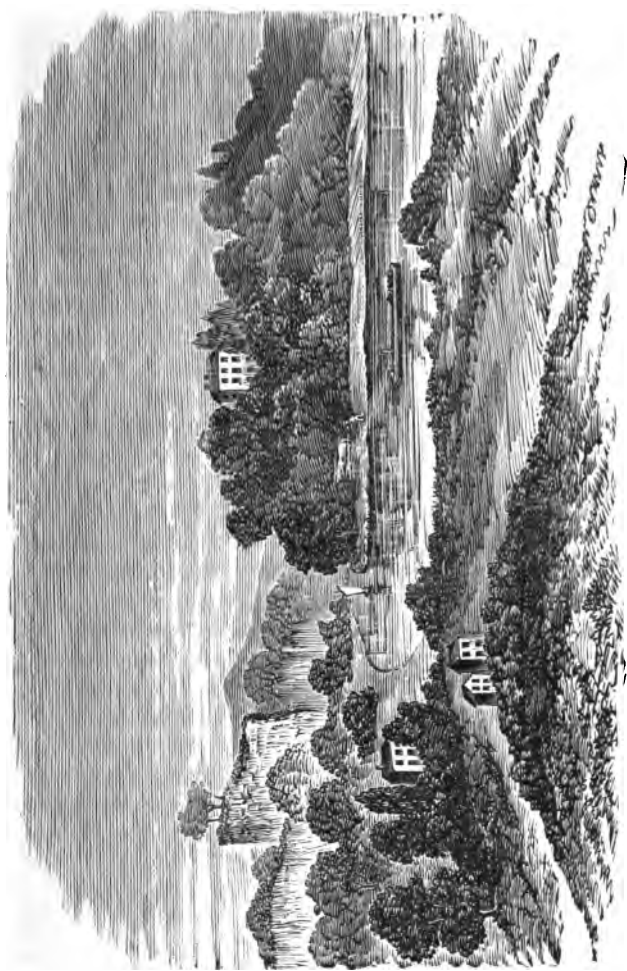
Like to a maiden dreaming a sweet dream,  
 Nature reposes indolently gay,  
 Proud as a bride upon her nuptial day ;  
 The blossom'd hedges line the narrow lanes,  
 And not one leaf shows signs of past decay !  
 Whilst happy labourers sing their rustic strains,  
 As forth they drive their teams along the blooming plains.

And like the stars that deck the silent night,  
 Rise many mansions, studded o'er the scene ;  
 Lo ! Winterdyne stands forth on yonder height  
 Of hardy rocks, yet none more richly green,  
 Of lovely walks and beauteous grotts the queen ;—  
 If happiness to human hearts be known,  
 Thy inmates are supremely blest I ween,  
 " For like the fabled Cytherea's zone,"  
 Thou bindest all with beauty—beauty thine alone.

If ever nature inspiration gives,  
 If from her impulse spring poetio powers,  
 If 'midst her beauties intellect e'er thrives,  
 Or genius blooms amongst her fragrant flowers,  
 Then each and all must flourish in thy bowers ;  
 And swift as lightning slips away each year,  
 For midst such scenes, years seem but fleeting hours ;  
 Whilst to the old, time makes thee still more dear,  
 And deep within young hearts, affection's altars rear !

Like modest worth, far from the public gaze  
 Thou stand'st unseen ; for those who know thee not  
 Would careless pass thee by, nor dream that maze,  
 And winding walks, and seats, and sheltered grot,  
 Combine to make thee an unequalled spot ;  
 Like to an eagle's nest built on a rock  
 Thou soar'st above the valley's humble cot,  
 Or as the mountain goat, thou seem'st to mock  
 The unambitious paths trod by the bleating flock.

Here as I gaze, astonishment commands  
 The greedy eye, with scenes of magic hue,  
 As if Queen Mab had op'd her fairy lands  
 In full exuberance to mortal view,  
 And deck'd each spot with loveliness anew ;  
 Fiction 'tis said, than truth is not more strange,



Page 26.

WINTERDYNE HOUSE, BEWDLEY.



And if the mind to truth would be but true,  
Then would the human family exchange  
Blessings as yet unknown, and endless in their range.

Oh truth ! eternal truth ! how rare the soil  
By human hands e'er till'd to grow thy flowers ;  
How few that make thy laws their daily toil,  
How few that long to dwell in thy pure bowers !  
Or yet devote to thee their fleeting hours ;  
Hail, fearless truth ! be thou close to my side,  
Whether my sky be bright, or darkly lowers ;  
Be thou my muse, my patron, and my guide,  
For in my inmost soul thou reignest deified.

Lead thou my mind's eye forth, and let it probe  
Into great Nature's stores, where'er abound  
The gems created to adorn the globe,  
Not only in the hemispheres around,  
But such as in our native isles are found :  
The smallest streamlet with its native race,  
The mimic nations filling up each mound ;  
The insect hordes in their allotted place  
Filling, with active life, stream, soil, and airy space.

See where both worlds, the animate and dead,  
Fellow creations of the same great Hand,  
Two classes owning but one Parent Head,  
Are bound together in a mutual band ?  
Twin born in sympathy they fall or stand.  
The earth without man's hand would be a waste,  
Whilst savage beasts would lord it o'er the land,  
And man debarr'd the world's rich stores to taste,  
Would soon to apathetic dismal horrors haste.

Still evermore our minds are tempest-tossed,  
And visited by all the winds of heaven !  
Yet sailor-like we steer unto the coast  
We most desire, though sails and masts be riven ;  
And if against time's storm we've daily striven,  
Bright hope smiles in our souls, and still will smile,  
And though upon despair's rough coast oft driven,  
Patience will always find a teeming soil,  
To bless enfeebled age when past the power to toil.

My new landlady was of a very different caste of mind to the one I had just escaped from. She was rather deaf, so she did not mind the noise of the flute, and like all deaf persons she was very talkative, and loud-voiced, and as many other people are who have been reared in country places, she was very superstitious; that is, a great believer in ghosts, charms, and dreams.

Thus for many an hour, whilst her husband was out at night, carousing with his neighbours, she told me about the ghosts she had seen, the dreams she had had, and the charms that were most potent.

Upon telling her that I did not believe in ghosts she seemed astonished, and averred that the split in the large elm in the Park was caused by a ghost passing through it, and she believed that on any night except Christmas eve (which was a forbidden eve to ghostly appearances), they might be met with in the forest up the road, and as a proof of this, she said that all persons born on a Christmas eve, could not see a ghost though close to them.

What gave a zest to my listening to her narrations, was her gift of quoting verses in favour of her belief in ghosts; her quotations in these matters were inexhaustible, such as—

“’Tis true that milkmaids meet the fairy train,  
And headless horses drag the clinking chain :  
That midnight ghosts by saucer eye-balls known,  
Visit each hamlet and small country town.”

No doubt the foundation of this strange belief in apparitions arose first in her young days, when she lived at Lower Wick, near Worcester, where she was born and reared. That neighbourhood is full of ghost stories, and amongst the rest is one chronicled in the “Athenæum,” by Mr. Jabez Allies, a late very respectable citizen of Worcester. It is as follows :—“A spectre used to appear in the parish of Leigh, whom the people called ‘Old Cole’s Ghost,’ who used to ride at the dead of the night, as swift as the wind, on the road between Bransford and Brocamin, called Leigh Walk, in a coach drawn by four horses, with fire flying out of their nostrils, and that they always dashed over the great barn at Leigh Court, and then on into the river Teme. At last it was laid by twelve parsons at dead of night, by the light of an inch candle; and as

he was not allowed to rise again until the candle was quite burnt out, it was therefore thrown into the pool, and to make all sure, the pool was filled up,

And peaceful after slept 'Old Cole's Shade.' "

The reason given for "Old Cole's" visits was that property belonging to the family for many generations had passed into other hands.

My landlady was full of omens too, such as spilt salt, knives and forks crossed on a Friday, a coffin in the fire, a croaking raven, and transplanting parsley; these were to her signs of evil to come, and if ever I sneezed whilst sitting listening to her, she always cried "God bless you," as she said many people died when they sneezed, without any illness being on them, unless this ejaculation was used by a by-stander.

Dreams were to her great prognosticators; she had several editions of dream books, which she studied much more than her Bible, except those parts of it wherein dreams were mentioned, such as those of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar.

I passed many an hour listening to her, and with all my disbelief, an impression was then made that I have never been able to shake off thoroughly, up to this hour.

On the next Sunday after taking possession of my new lodgings, a neighbour's son proposed a visit to Hartlebury Church, where he told me the Bishop sometimes preached. To this I readily assented, as I had never seen a Bishop, and the interest of the ramble was heightened when my friend told me that the Bishop lived in the Castle, near to the church. There were no railways then, so we started on foot, the distance being only about six miles. On our way he told me that he had been there before, and had been told by his grandfather that George III. had visited the Castle when Dr. Hurd was Bishop. I asked him if there was anything else worth seeing, and he said, nothing but a grammar school.

We reached Hartlebury Castle Park walls two hours before time, and having leave from the gate-keeper, we sauntered up the avenue. The Castle, as the Bishop's residence is called, was

built by "the over-bearing, litigious, and high-spirited Godfrey de Giffard, Chancellor of England and Bishop of Worcester," in the thirteenth century; he was very powerful, and arrogant, but withal good-natured. To meet the demands of the latter quality, he was guilty of various illegal exactions, extortions, and misappropriations.

As I gazed on the ancient building, my memory reverted to the time when the Princess Mary (afterwards Queen) visited it; to the times of the various celebrated Bishops of this Diocese:—Lloyd, the benevolent founder of the School bearing his name at Worcester;\* Bishop Cantelupe, who withstood in 1255 the Pope's tax on the clergy; Bishop Carpenter, who built Redcliffe Church, in Bristol; Bishop Hooper, martyred in 1555; the great Bishop Stillingfleet; Bishop Hough, the patriot; Bishop Maddox, the originator of Worcester Infirmary; and Bishop Hurd, who declined the primacy, and built the library, eighty-four feet long, and filled it with Bishop Warburton's and the poet Pope's libraries, as well as with other books.

Most of the Bishops' residences are called palaces, but the palace of this Diocese being in the city of Worcester, the favourite episcopal residence at Hartlebury has always been called a Castle.

We returned up the avenue, and reached the church in time, but to our disappointment we found that the Bishop was not at home. We were, however, pleased to hear from the clerk, before entering the edifice, that the Rector was a far better preacher than the Bishop, "Who," said he, "preaches twice as long as the Rector and tells us nothing worth hearing." I fancied that the clerk, having heard so many sermons in his time, did not care about those that were lengthy, even though preached by a Bishop.

After service we walked up to the Grammar School to have a

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\* A Mrs. Palmer and her maid servant were murdered at Upton-Snods-bury in Nov., 1707, her only son being one of the gang. By his death a lease of a portion of the tithes of "Sheriffs Lench" and an estate at "White Ladies Aston," were forfeited to Bishop Lloyd, who being unwilling to receive this "price of blood," founded therewith a school at Worcester, and other charities.



look at it. The appearance outside did not at all accord with the Church, much more the grand Castle ; and I could not help remarking, that the large revenues of the Bishopric, and the £2,000 per annum of rectorial tithes (more than £1 per head for the whole population), might, could, would, or should spare enough to erect a Grammar School, co-equal in architecture with the above-mentioned Church of England erections.

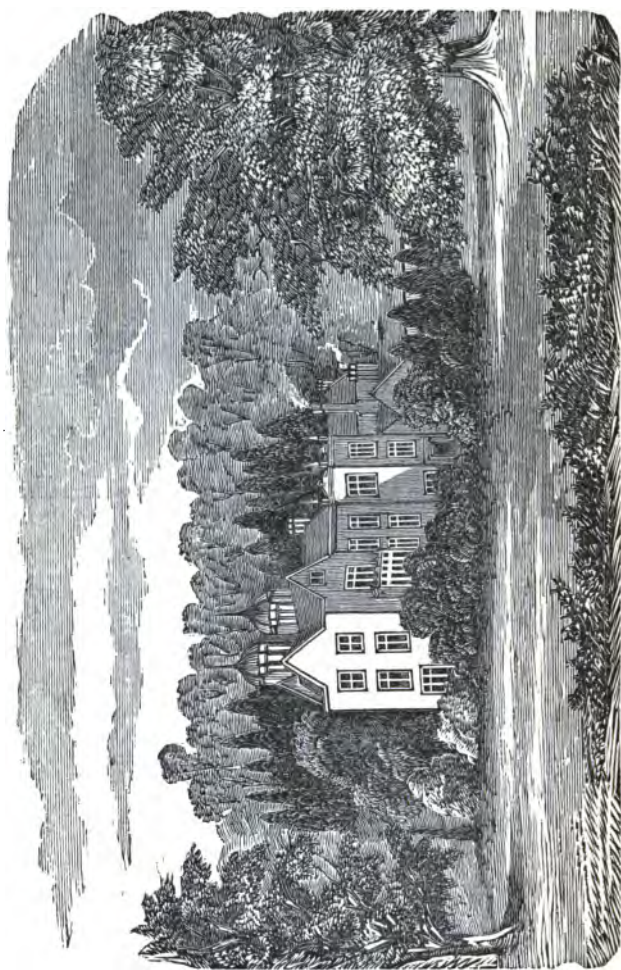
After duly giving our opinions thereupon to each other, we adjourned to the "White Hart," where getting into conversation with the landlord, we learned that to the mind's eye, the interior of the school on a "week day's" admittance would be more offensive to us than the state of the exterior.

He said that the school was very badly attended, that for four or five years no free boys had been admitted to the upper, or head master's part of the school ; and that in the lower or usher's school, they did not muster more than twenty to thirty, although both of them were allowed to take boarders, so as to increase their incomes, and to live rent free, and that they received salaries from the school endowment also.

He told us in addition that many of the school lands had been appropriated to private individuals, and that leases were granted under fines, at very low rents, to the occupiers of the rest of the properties.

This was a sad tale, and the landlord said, that the parish would be much better off were the school shut up altogether, and that no doubt in that event, some private person would establish a school on his own account, for the resort of parishioners' sons.

On our way home I could not keep from ruminating on the management of the school and its properties, but as it had been said by a great authority that "faults that are rich are fair," and that "the poor man's right in the law is like a fish hanging in the net—'twill hardly come out," wrong must be right. The poor boys could remain in ignorance, it would make no great difference to them ; what do poor boys want with learning ? they have only to go to work, to give them education would make them dissatisfied. Thus do many men argue who ought to know better.



RIBBESTORD HOUSE, BEWDLEY.

### CHAPTER III.

A fond farewell ! a last and long farewell  
To thee, sweet Ribbesford, and thy rural sweets ;  
Oh ! happy task, thy various joys to tell,  
And wander, in the mind, o'er thy retreats !  
Now, like the sailor boy's, my bosom beats  
With throbbings, as I take a last fond view,  
Nor till the evening's shade the vision cheats,  
Can I withdraw my longing eyes from you,  
Adieu to Ribbesford's charms ! Hark ! echo cries adieu !

Just at this period I borrowed Crabbe's Poems, and in his satire on newspapers I met with the following lines, which almost took my breath away. Speaking of the different sorts of contributors to a newspaper, he says :—

“ Last in these ranks, and least, their art's disgrace,  
Neglected stand the Muses' meanest race :  
Scribblers who court contempt, whose verse the eye  
Disdainful views, and quickly passes by ;  
The “ Poet's Corner ” is the place they choose,  
A fatal nursery for an infant muse ;  
Unlike that “ Corner ” where true poets lie,  
These cannot live, and they shall never die ;  
Hapless the lad whose mind such dreams invade,  
And wins to verse the talents due to trade.

Go ! to your desks, to counters go ! return !  
Your sonnets scatter, your acrostics burn ;  
Trade and be rich, or should your careful sires  
Bequeath you wealth, indulge the nobler fires.  
Should love of fame your youthful hearts betray,  
Pursue fair fame, but in a glorious way,  
Nor in the idle scenes of Fancy's painting stray.”

This had such an effect upon me, that I began to ask myself whether I was not acting foolishly in wasting my time writing verses, and after many interrogations and answers between myself and number one, I resolved to shut up the shop at "Poet's Corner," and as Crabbe advised, stick to my desk, and try to get renown in a more plodding way.

I found this to be a hard task; I could scarcely believe (every now and then) that all my "castles in the air" could be knocked down at one blow; but knocked down they were, and I stood with my hands in my pockets, looking at the ruins, in a most miserable state of mind.

It luckily happened the very next day after my poetical collapse, that the salesman at the office told me he wanted me to go with him to Kidderminster market; this at once removed my dejection, especially when he told me that I should ride on a brown pony, whilst he rode on a horse.

After the first feelings of pleasure that this announcement gave me, I began to think whether I should not cut a worse figure on the brown pony, than I did on Pegasus.

I had never ridden a pony in my life, and it seemed very strange to me that he should ask me to ride such a short distance (three miles), when I could much more easily walk it, especially as walking was in my opinion much safer than riding. Upon my stating that I should prefer walking, he said that that could not be, as he wanted to meet a person at market, who had some notion of buying the pony, and he wanted me, being a light weight, to trot the pony along-side the horse, when he met his friend at market, to show its paces.

This disquieted me more, but for fear he should call in some one else to do this duty, by which I should perhaps lose the opportunity of going to market again, I made up my mind to obey whether I kept in the saddle or not.

When mounted I felt very uncomfortable, especially as the pony was very fresh from having been kept in the stable, "to get him up," as the salesman said, "for sale." This "getting up" led to my running several risks of "getting down" on the turn-

pike road, which my companion seemed to enjoy heartily, adding occasionally a stroke across my shoulders with his whip, to make me sit upright.

The corn market at that time was held in the front of the "Lion Hotel," in the open air ; millers, farmers, maltsters, and dealers were all busy making bargains. I entered into their operations with zest, listening to their conversations as to prices and qualities, and thought how happy I should be, if regularly employed in attending markets. After the market was over, we went to dinner, at which fish, flesh, poultry, puddings, bread and cheese, and ale, were provided. This was a treat to me ; I felt exalted when I thought that I should some time or other be recognized as a regular market salesman, to buy and sell, and partake of good dinners amongst such company.

My companion having business to transact, he told me I might take a ramble through the town, and then return home, as the pony was sold.

Having heard that the church was worth seeing I made my way to it. Upon entering the churchyard a number of boys were sallying out of a building at the eastern end of the church ; these I found were the grammar school boys, and the building from whence they issued was the ancient grammar school.

As the school doors stood open I walked in to see what the interior was like. There were two rooms, one called the upper schoolroom, the other the lower ; they were in very good order.

On coming out I saw a person unlocking the main church door, (he was parish clerk and went by the name of "old Forrester," properly Thomas Forrester) ; I asked his leave to see the inside of the church ; he not only allowed me, but showed great interest in calling my attention to the large tombs in the chancel, of very ancient date, belonging to the Blount family, who were patrons of the church in Catholic times.

I asked him how many masters there were in the grammar school, he said there were two now, but there were two and a quarter just two years ago. I looked at him and began to think he was insane. "How could there be two and a quarter?"

said I. "Oh right enough, the old'un was a pensioner, not able to do duty, so they sacked him and allowed him a quarter of his successor's salary, so that he was only a quarter of the new head master; now you understand I suppose." "And how many boys are there in the school?" I asked. "Oh, they are pretty well divided between the two masters," said he, "nine upper, ten lower. The nine upper cost £290 and the ten lower £145; that's the arithmetic they have learned—rule of two, not rule of three; thus if nine upper boys are worth £290, what are ten lower worth? just half, throwing one extra boy in as a blessing, ha! ha!" and he laughed at his own way of reckoning. "And pray," said I, finding him willing to talk, "what do they teach?" "Why in the upper," said he, "the dead talk, and in the lower the living talk. I wish they would let me bury the dead, as I am parish clerk; the dead talk is of no use here, as nobody speaks the dead talk, and very few know how to speak the living. The head master is Curate of Stone, and Rector of Rushock, so he makes a tidy few sovereigns out of the three jobs, don't he?" and he placed his hands on his knees, and stooped to have a hearty ha! ha! ha! "And where does the head master live?" said I. "Oh! he has *two livings*, and so lives in two places at once, of course; he comes over here every morning to teach the nine boys; when he began there were but two or three, so he transplanted twenty from the lower to the upper school when he was promoted from the one to the other, but they have dropped off one by one like apples from an unsound tree, until there are but nine left; but what does that matter: he would have the same £290 if there was only one in his school, and it bids fair to come to that." "Why does not the Bishop see to it, he ought not to allow the head master to have two other occupations; the Bishop ought not to have consented to his residing in the country, to the hindrance of the welfare of the school; and the school ought to be full considering that the two masters have £435 between them?" "And that is not all" said he, "you see those two good houses by the church gates, they were built for the masters, and cost with the land whereon they were built £1,800, but the head master has let his and puts

the rent (thirty guineas) in his pocket, and the second master grumbles because he has no other job, and is obliged to live near the school, but you see he isn't a parson; that makes all the difference, don't it, he! he! he!" and he laughed heartily again, and then added, "and they pay no rent for the school like private masters." "I always heard," I replied, "that Bishop Hurd was a good man, but that cannot be seeing that he has done this wrong to the people of Kidderminster." "Ah," said the sexton, "they're all much of a muchness, the last Bishop gave the head master a license of non-residence for the most distant church, and he pays a Curate a bread and cheese salary to do the work, and this was done because he was head master of our school." "Then it seems to me," I remarked "that the school funds are wasted, and that the poor boys in the town are growing up in ignorance." "You might be further off the truth by a mile," said the sexton, "but who is to alter it for the better," after which he laughed again and wished me good evening.

I turned towards home, and crossed the river Stour, behind Mill Street. The three miles walk seemed very short to me as I was busy in my mind remonstrating with the Bishop for his impropriety in appointing the head master to the livings, and allowing him to live away from the school, and I felt indignant at the latter for his want of sympathy with the people of Kidderminster from whose school revenues and house rent he derived £321 10s.0d. yearly.

Not long after my equestrian visit to Kidderminster, I heard from my master's lips, that as the trade was dropping off in that district, he intended removing to Birmingham, so as to concentrate the management and correspondence in that town, and that he wished me to go with him, to be in the office there.

Here was an end to my rambles, and to my prospects of going to markets. I felt very unhappy, but as I liked my employer very much, I consented.

The salesman alone was to remain, and a plan was arranged for him to transmit his accounts, and go to Birmingham now and then. I asked him privately if he would try to persuade the

governor to revoke his plan, and let me remain and manage the warehouses, but he said he dare not.

On the other hand I liked well enough to be near my relatives at Birmingham, and I consoled myself with the thought that very likely I should be sent to Bewdley occasionally.

At length the time arrived, and I returned to the now very important town of Birmingham; more important than ever, from its being the head of the Reform movement. This question was all absorbing with the great majority of the people. The Ministry had been beaten twice in the House of Commons; and these victories made the opposition more obstinate, and the people more enraged.

Things came to such a pitch, that the King went to the House of Lords, and summoned the Commons to meet him there. He prorogued the Parliament, and announced that it would be dissolved, to take the sense of the country as to Reform. London and nearly every town and village were illuminated on receipt of this news. The windows of the Duke of Wellington's town residence (Apsley House), and those of Sir Robert Peel, and many other anti-reformers were broken by the people.

Looking back to the political struggles in 1831 and 1832, it was a wonder that a revolution did not take place. The Bill was carried in the session of 1831, by a majority of 109 on the third reading in the Lower House, but after a debate of five nights in the Upper House, it was rejected. The majority was forty-one, of which twenty-one were Bishops. The country was very much enraged by the news, when the mails reached the various cities and towns in the provinces. Riots ensued; at Derby the prison was broken open, and at Nottingham the Duke of Newcastle's residence was set on fire. Some of the London newspapers were published with black borders, and on Sir Charles Wetherell, the Recorder of Bristol, making a public official entry into that city, the people attacked the Mansion House, the Excise Office, and the Bishop's Palace, and set them on fire. The toll-gates were pulled down, the prisons were broken open, and the prisoners let loose. Sixteen persons lost their lives, some



of them at the hands of the military, some by excessive drinking at the Bishop's Palace; and shops, houses, liquor vaults and cellars were ransacked.

In London the Political Union met, Sir F. Burdett being chairman, and passed reform resolutions, and the working classes called another meeting at White Conduit Fields to pass republican resolutions, but it was forbidden by the government.

Again the House of Commons passed the Bill, and again the House of Lords rejected it, on the 7th of May, 1832, and on the 9th the Ministry resigned.

The people then held mass meetings in the provinces, declaring that they would pay no taxes until the Bill was passed; trade was nearly suspended, and the various Unions threatened to march to London, to enforce the Bill; they were in turn threatened with the army; the press to a great extent advised resistance to the army, and constitutional lawyers spoke at public meetings of armies failing their kings, and of decapitations of royalty in past times.

On the 14th of May, 1832, at Birmingham two hundred thousand people met, on New-Hall hill, under the leadership of Mr. Attwood, the banker (the originator of Political Unions), and passed resolutions, declaring against the payment of taxes, and their determination to march and encamp on Hampstead Heath, in conjunction with other Unions.

Before the business commenced they sung the Rev. Hugh Hutton's spirit-stirring hymn:—

"THE GATHERING OF THE UNIONS."

Over mountain, over plain,  
 Echoing wide from sea to sea,  
 Peals, and shall not peal in vain,  
 The trumpet call of liberty;  
 Britain's guardian spirit cries,  
 Britons awake! awake! arise!  
 Sleep no more, the sleep of shame,  
 Rise and break oppression's chain!  
 Lulled by Freedom's empty name,  
 Worse than slaves no more remain;

Freedom's rights not freedom's name  
Dare to know and dare to claim.

Shall honest labour toil in vain,

While plunder fattens on the land,  
Still shall a tyrant faction's reign,

People and King at once command ;  
No ! it may not, shall not be,  
For we must, we will be free.

Sleep ye still, while one by one,

Each sacred, dear-bought right is lost,  
Rights which your fathers' broad-swords won,  
Rights which your fathers' life-blood cost !

No ! it may not, shall not be,  
For we must, we will be free.

See ! rises from the bed of fame,

Each chief of glorious Runymede,  
With Hampden ! history's noblest name,

They call us to our country's need ;  
They call, and can we heedless be,  
No ! for we must, we will be free.

But not to war and blood they call,

They bid us lift nor sword or gun,

Peaceful, but firm, join one and all,

To claim your rights and they are won.

The British Lion's voice alone,  
Shall gain for Britain all her own.

The barracks were closed, and orders were given out to sharpen all the swords. It was stated that if the members of the Union marched, the troops were to turn out, and stop them. The Scotch Greys were the occupiers of the barracks at Birmingham at this time, and some of the oldest of them said that their swords had never been sharpened since the battle of Waterloo.

Some of the soldiers were so bold as to write to the King, the Duke of Wellington, and the War Office, stating that the Scotch Greys would not interfere with the people, so long as they marched to London peaceably ; and many other letters were also written, and dropped in the streets ; one of them concluded as follows :—" If you do nothing but make speeches, sign

petitions, and go peaceably to present them, though you go in thousands, the Greys will not prevent you."

It was believed that the fear of a mutiny in the army was the real cause of the Bill being ultimately passed, many soldiers having become members of Political Unions, and written letters to the papers in favour of Reform; one of these concluded a paragraph thus:—"The Duke of Wellington, if he sees or hears of this, may assure himself that military government shall never again be set up in this country."

This letter was written to an anti-reform newspaper, and was published in its columns on the 27th May. The author of it was a private in the Scotch Greys, of the name of Alexander Somerville, and this was soon discovered by the military authorities. Proceedings were at once taken against him, he was tried by court martial the very next day, after a notice of one hour and a half only, received one hundred lashes, and was then sent to the hospital.

The illegal and inhuman conduct of the commanding officer being made known to the public through the newspapers, a ferment took place amongst the people, quite unparalleled. Their indignation was without bounds, and great fears were entertained for the safety of the officers in the barracks. The fuel thus added to the fire of the Reform movement was terrific, and had it not been for Somerville's urgent requests to the people to keep the peace, the barracks no doubt would have been turned into a heap of ruins.

The commanding officer was brought before "a Court of Inquiry" and censured for his conduct, and shortly afterwards Somerville was discharged, as the public came forward and raised a subscription to pay for the discharge, to which was added £250 for himself.

In Birmingham itself, amongst "this sea of troubles," the people were nearly unanimous, and there can be no doubt, that the few who were against the Reform movement dared not say so, in consequence of the excited feelings created by the obstinacy of the House of Lords.

Black flags were hung from the top windows of the houses and hoisted on the top of one of the churches; printed bills were placed in the windows, declaring that no more taxes would be paid until "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill" was passed. Everybody in the streets wore the "Political Union" medals, or "Union Jack" ribbons. For nine days there was no government of any sort, but the opposition at last gave way, "in consequence of the present state of affairs," as Sir Herbert Taylor, the king's private secretary said, in a letter written to Earl Grey, by command of His Majesty; and the Bill was at last passed in the Lords by a majority of eighty-four, only twenty two of the opposition being in the House, the remainder of that party absenting themselves.

It will be interesting here to insert a few of the political transactions of that period, which I have preserved.

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#### "OBJECTS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS OF THE BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION,

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##### OBJECTS OF THE POLITICAL UNION.

1st.—To obtain by every just and legal means, such a REFORM in the COMMONS' HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT, as may ensure a REAL and EFFECTUAL REPRESENTATION of the LOWER and MIDDLE CLASSES of the PEOPLE in that House.

2nd.—To inquire, consult, consider, and determine, respecting the rights and liberties of the industrious classes, and respecting the legal means of securing those which remain, and recovering those which are lost.

3rd.—To prepare Petitions, Addresses, and Remonstrances to the Crown and the Legislative Bodies, respecting the *preservation* and *restoration* of PUBLIC RIGHTS, and respecting the repeal of *bad laws*, and the enactment of *good laws*.

4th.—To prevent and redress as far as practicable, all LEGAL PUBLIC WRONGS, AND OPPRESSIONS, and all LOCAL ENCROACHMENTS upon the rights, interests, and privileges of the community.

5th.—To obtain the repeal of the MALT and the BEER TAXES; and, in general, to obtain an alteration in the system of taxation, so as to cause it to press less severely upon the industrious classes of the community, and more equally upon the wealthy classes.

6th.—To obtain the *reduction of each separate Tax and Expense* of the Government in the same degree as the *legislative increase* in the *value of money* has increased their *respective values*, and *has reduced and is reducing the general prices of labour* throughout the country.

7th.—To promote *peace, union, and concord* among all classes of His Majesty's subjects; and to guide and direct the public mind into uniform, peaceful, and legitimate operations, instead of leaving it to waste its own strength, in loose, desultory, and unconnected exertions, or to carve to its own objects, unguided, unassisted, and uncontrolled.

8th.—To collect and organise the peaceful expression of the PUBLIC OPINION, so as to bring it to act upon the legislative functions in a just, legal and effectual way.

9th.—To influence, by every legal means, the election of members of Parliament, so as to promote the return of upright and capable Representatives of the People.

10th.—To adopt such measures as may be legal and necessary for the purpose of obtaining an effectual Parliamentary investigation into the situation of the country, and into the cause of its embarrassments and difficulties; with the view of relieving the NATIONAL DISTRESS, of rendering justice to the injured as far as practicable, and of bringing to trial any individuals, in whatever station, who may be found to have acted from criminal or corrupt motives.

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE POLITICAL UNION.

1st.—The Constitution of this Society is essentially popular. It admits as equal members, all persons whatever, whose names shall be registered in the Books of the Union, so long as they shall conform to the Rules and Regulations of the Union.

2nd.—The general management of the affairs of the UNION is committed to a POLITICAL COUNCIL, chosen annually at the General Meetings of the MEMBERS OF THE UNION, and subject only to the control of such annual or other general meetings.

3rd.—All persons becoming members of the Union, are expected to contribute such donations and annual or quarterly subscriptions as they can conveniently afford, the subscriptions not being less than 1s. per quarter.

4th.—A General Annual Meeting of the members of the Union takes place on the First Monday in July. The members of the Union also meet whenever called together by order of the Political Council, or by a Requisition signed by the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Political Council, and countersigned by the Secretary; or by a Requisition signed by any seven of the Political Council, or by not less than two hundred Members of the Union. No General Meeting can be held unless the Requisition is

advertised in a Birmingham newspaper, or otherwise placarded in fifty streets of the Town. The Secretary produces the books for inspection at all general meetings.

5th.—The general meetings of the members of the Union choose annually on the First Monday in July, the POLITICAL COUNCIL of not less than 36 individuals; into whose hands the disposition and expenditure of the funds of the Society, and the general management of its concerns for the ensuing year, are confided.

6th.—The Political Council cannot exist more than one year without being *re-chosen* by the general meetings. At the general meetings, each individual is put in nomination separately (or in such way as the general meetings may direct), and is declared a member of the Council by the majority of the members of the Union present. The chairman decides on which side is the majority; unless a division is demanded by fifty members present, in which case a division takes place, and tellers are appointed on each side.

7th.—The general meetings choose annually three Auditors for the ensuing year, who shall pass the accounts of the Council for such year; and in case two such auditors shall not agree in passing the accounts, the subject of difference shall be submitted to the general meetings.

8th.—The general meetings choose a Treasurer and Trustees, in whose hands the funds of the society are deposited.

9th.—The Political Council meet weekly, or as often as they may deem necessary; at such meetings five of them are competent to act, they keep a record of their proceedings, and they appoint general meetings of the society as often as may be found expedient.

10th.—The Political Council appoint a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman, a Secretary, Collectors of Contributions, and such other officers, either with or without salaries, as may be found expedient.

11th.—The Council employ such solicitors and legal advisers as they may approve.

12th.—The Council employ the funds of the society solely in effecting the objects of the society, to the best of their judgement and discretion, and no money can be drawn from the treasurer or trustees, without an *order passed by the Council and signed by five of its members.*

13th.—No part of the funds of the society can be expended in any object in which a member of the Council is personally interested, without the previous consent of two-thirds of the members of the Council present at a meeting specially called for the purpose of considering the subject.

14th.—The Council pay their own expenses. They hold no secret meetings. They have power to add to their number, and to dismiss from

the general meetings any persons disturbing the peace, or violating the rules and regulations of the society.

15th.—No alteration of or addition to the rules and regulations of the society can be adopted without being previously submitted to the Council and recommended by a majority to a General Meeting of the Society.

16th.—The subscriptions of noblemen and gentlemen are invited in support of the POLITICAL UNION, the objects of which being strictly conservatory, are calculated, in restoring the just rights and interests of the INDUSTRIAL CLASSES, to confirm the CONSTITUTIONAL PRIVILEGES of the ARISTOCRACY, and to preserve every class of community from the common anarchy which threatens all.

#### THE DUTY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL UNION.

1st.—To be good, faithful, and loyal subjects of the King.

2nd.—To obey the laws of the land; and, where they cease to protect the Rights, Liberties, and Interests of the community, to endeavour to get them changed by just, legal, and peaceful means ONLY.

3rd.—To present themselves at all general meetings of the POLITICAL UNION, as far as they conveniently can; to conduct themselves peaceably and legally at such meetings, and to depart to their respective homes as soon as the chairman shall leave the chair.

4th.—To choose only just, upright, and able men, as members of the POLITICAL COUNCIL, and to dismiss them, and elect others in their stead, whenever they shall cease to watch over and defend the RIGHTS, LIBERTIES, AND INTERESTS OF THE LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES OF THE PEOPLE.

5th.—To obey strictly all the just and legal directions of the POLITICAL COUNCIL, so soon as they shall be made public, and so far as they can legally and conveniently be obeyed.

6th.—To bear in mind that the strength of our society consists in the PEACE, Order, Unity, and LEGALITY, of our proceedings; and to consider all persons as enemies who shall, in any way, invite or promote violence, discord, or any illegal, or doubtful measures.

7th.—Never to forget that, by the exercise of the above qualities, we shall produce the peaceful display of an immense organised moral power, which cannot be despised or disregarded; but that, if we do not keep clear of the *innumerable and intricate Laws* which surround us, the *Lawyer* and the *Soldier* will probably break in upon us, and render all our exertions vain.

#### THE DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL COUNCIL.

1st.—To endeavour to the utmost of their power, to carry into effect the OBJECTS of the POLITICAL UNION, by every just, legal, and peaceful means.

2nd.—To use none other than just, legal, and peaceful means.

3rd.—To seek no private objects of their own, and to use the funds of the society solely in promoting the objects of the society.

4th.—To watch closely the proceedings of the Legislature, and to present petitions and remonstrances to the Crown and Legislative Bodies whenever the Rights, Liberties, and Interests of the lower and middle classes of the community are invaded; or, whenever they can be restored or secured.

5th.—To endeavour to devise the means of preserving the peace and order of this town and neighbourhood, during any political convulsions which may be brought upon the country, through the distress occasioned by the mismanagement of public affairs.

6th.—To consider and report upon the legality and practicability of holding CENTRICAL MEETINGS OF DELEGATES from the INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES, in the same manner as similar kinds of MEETINGS were lately held by the DELEGATES of the *Agriculturists* assembled at Henderson's Hotel.

7th.—To consider the means of organizing a system of operations, whereby the PUBLIC PRESS may be influenced to act generally in support of the PUBLIC INTERESTS.

8th.—In all their proceedings to look chiefly to the recovery and preservation of the RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF THE LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES OF THE PEOPLE, taking care never to sanction any measures which are calculated to circumscribe or endanger any just rights or immunities of the privileged orders.

#### ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS.

*Adopted at the General Meeting, May 17, 1830.*

1st.—That the following Medal be adopted as the Badge of the Union, attached to a ribbon, on which is enwoven the Red Cross of St. George, quartered with that of St. Andrew, commonly called the British Union Jack, a standard which has nobly supported the national honour in foreign climes, and which, we trust, will be equally efficacious in the great moral contest for recovering the national liberty at home.

Obverse of the Medal. The British Lion arousing himself from slumber. Legend above, "The Safety of the King and of the People." Legend below, "The Constitution, nothing less, and nothing more."

Reverse of the Medal. The Royal Crown of England irradiated. Immediately beneath the crown on a scroll, the words "Unity," "Liberty," "Prosperity." Legend above, "God save the King." Legend below, "Birmingham Political Union, 25th January, 1830."

2nd.—That only one medal shall be delivered to each member of the Union, and that it shall on no account be delivered to any person whatever whose name is not enrolled as a member of the Union, with this exception,



that each member shall have the liberty of purchasing one silver medal in addition.

3rd.—That the basis of this Union being a strict and dutiful obedience to the laws, any act or proceeding of any person or persons, which may not be in strict conformity with the laws is altogether disowned, and rejected by this Union, and declared to be utterly void as to all persons, save such as personally and individually take part in such act or proceeding, and every such person is hereby declared to cease to be a member of this Union, and his expulsion is hereby declared accordingly.

THOMAS ATTWOOD, CHAIRMAN.

By Order of the Political Council.

BENJAMIN HADLEY, HONORARY SECRETARY.

Printed by R. Brookes, 86, Suffolk-street, Birmingham.

The following letter will speak for itself. The adhesion of several members of the Society of Friends to the Union was of great moment, inasmuch as they never aid or join any movement not strictly conducted on peace principles:—

BIRMINGHAM, THIRD MONTH (MARCH), 16TH, 1832.

A PARAGRAPH (sent we understand by an individual, whose name is withheld from us), having appeared in the "BIRMINGHAM GAZETTE" of last week, stating that of the Members of the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, "Three or four young men only, have, in the moment of excitement, been induced to enrol their names (as Members of the Political Union), and that they have done so in direct violation of the advices of the Society, issued for the government of its Members, in times in which the public feeling may be agitated by civil and political questions of great interest."—We, as two of the parties so designated, consider it our duty to give a direct contradiction to the statement, in all its particulars.

Not only is the number of those who have signed the Declaration understated, and their character incorrectly described, but we deny that the step they took, was any violation of the letter or spirit of the "Advices of the Society."

The advices alluded to, were issued at various periods, since the origin of the Society, and for the most part had reference to the particular circumstances of the day. Their general tenour is to recommend a respectful obedience to the King, and the Constituted Authorities (in all points not interfering with conscience), and to caution our members against being "ensnared by the animosity of contending parties," with a particular

reference to contested elections, the practices of which they strongly condemn. It will be obvious to any candid reader on perusing them, that they were not intended, and cannot be fairly construed to apply to every participation in political affairs, but only to such as are characterised by unlawful practices, and an un-christian spirit.

In the very same paragraph, from which the expressions quoted in the *Gazette* have been taken, we find the following words :—"He (the Christian) will not be improperly solicitous for his own ease and security, when he sees difficulties or troubles threatening those around him." Now we should be extremely sorry were it to go forth to the world, that there existed anything either in the principles, or the practice of the Society of Friends, which forbids its members from joining their fellow-countrymen in a peaceable co-operation, for the recovery of their political rights; and that at the present crisis, it should be thought that they did not, as a body, deeply sympathize with the almost unanimous desire of the nation for Parliamentary Reform, on which so many of the dearest interests of humanity depend; or were unwilling, as far as it is consistent with the peaceable principles of the Gospel, to share in the difficulties and dangers attendant on the effort for obtaining it.

Equally unfounded is the imputation conveyed in the expressions—"induced in the moment of excitement to enrol their names," &c., which coupled with what precedes and follows them, are obviously intended to give the impression, that we were weakly led by the influence of others, to commit an act opposed to the principles of the Society of Friends, which in calmer moments we should regret.

We consider it a Libel on the Society to impute to it principles, which forbid its Members at a crisis like the present, from associating with their fellow-countrymen, in any manner not inconsistent with the Doctrines of the Gospel, which they deem the most conducive to the public good. We do not pledge ourselves to defend all the past proceedings of the Political Union; but we assert, without fear of contradiction, that the main object for which it was formed, and the sole object for which we have joined it, is one which nine-tenths of the Members of our Society cordially approve; while in its rules and regulations, we find nothing which a Christian can condemn.

We take for example, the 1st, 2nd, and 6th articles of the duties incurred by the Members of the Political Union—which are as follows :—

"1st.—To be good, faithful, and loyal subjects to the KING."

"2nd.—To obey the laws of the land; and, where they cease to protect the Rights, Liberties, and Interests of the community, to endeavour to get them changed by just, legal, and peaceful means ONLY."

6th.—To bear in mind that the strength of our Society consists in the *PEACE, Order, Unity, and LEGALITY*, of our proceedings; and to consider all persons as enemies who shall, in any way, invite or promote violence, discord, or any illegal, or doubtful measures.

Add to these an additional regulation adopted soon afterwards:

“That the basis of this Union being a strict and dutiful obedience to the laws, any act or proceeding of any person or persons, which may not be in strict conformity with the laws, is altogether disowned, and rejected by this Union, and declared to be utterly void as to all persons, save such as personally and individually take part in such act or proceeding, and every such person is hereby declared to cease to be a member of this Union, and his expulsion is hereby declared accordingly.”

All the other regulations are consistent with the above; and we ask, can anything be more opposed to disorder and violence? Can anything more effectually tend to secure peaceful obedience to the laws, at the present awful crisis, and during the still more fearful times which we have reason to dread, than the influence of an association, comprising the great bulk of the lower, and a large portion of the middle classes, and binding its members to such a line of conduct as this? We think not; and we have therefore felt it a duty to give it our feeble support, by enrolling our names among its members; and in doing so, we have acted in the manner most conducive in our opinion to the great end of averting the evils which threaten our beloved Country.

So far from repenting the act, we feel convinced on the most mature reflection, and with a knowledge of what has since occurred, that it was not only right in itself, but that the great accession to the Union which took place, was peculiarly well timed. Far be it from us to condemn others who take different views, and have adopted another line of conduct; we allow them the same freedom of judgment which we claim for ourselves; efforts of various kinds may all work in harmony to promote the same great object, but we earnestly entreat all those persons, whether members of our own, or any other Society, who have hitherto been satisfied in doing nothing, to ask themselves the serious question, whether at such a period they fulfil the duties of a Citizen, and a Christian, if they any longer withhold their public support from the cause of Peace, Order, and Social Improvement.

JOSEPH STURGE.

JOHN STURGE.

P. S.—When the above was written we had not heard of the signal triumph obtained by the moral strength and peaceable union of the people; but we consider that in justice to ourselves, and the Society of which we are members, we are still equally bound to publish it.

## BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION.

At a MEETING of the INHABITANTS of the Town and Neighbourhood of BIRMINGHAM, held suddenly and spontaneously, to the number of 200,000 persons, at Newhall Hill, this 10th day of May, 1832.

THOMAS ATTWOOD, Esq.,

IN THE CHAIR;

*It was resolved unanimously,—*

1.—That the following Address and Petition be presented to the House of Commons :—

*To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled,*

The humble address and petition of the Inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Birmingham, assembled to the number of 200,000 person, at Newhall Hill, this 10th day of May, 1832,

SHEWETH,

1st.—That your Petitioners have been struck with surprise and alarm at the awful intelligence which has this day reached them respecting the dissolution of his Majesty's Government, and perilous crisis, on account of their persevering in supporting the Bill of Reform, as twice passed by your Honourable House.

2nd.—That under these unexpected and extraordinary circumstances, the life and property of no man in England are safe, and that the only possible way of giving safety to all, is to pass the Bill of Reform, unmutilated, into a law.

3rd.—That your Petitioners must now look upon your Honourable House as the last remaining stay which binds together the existing constitution of the country; and in the awful situation in which they find themselves and their country placed, they appeal to your Honourable House, and they earnestly implore your Honourable House not to shrink from the great duties before you, but manfully and fearlessly to support the Rights of the People, and to adopt whatever measures may be necessary for the Safety and Liberty of the country.

4th.—That it is only by the manly and patriotic exercise of the great duties which the Constitution has imposed upon your Honourable House that your Petitioners can now see any hope that the just and sacred Rights of Englishmen can be recovered in any way, except by means that will break up the fabric of society, and endanger the fortunes and the lives of millions.

5th.—That your Petitioners find it declared in the Bill of Rights that the people of England may "*have arms for their defence suitable to their condition, and as allowed by law;*" and your Petitioners apprehend that

this great right will be put in force generally, and that the whole of the people of England will think it necessary to have arms for their defence, in order that they may be prepared for any circumstances which may arise.

6th.—Your Petitioners do therefore most earnestly pray that your Honourable House will forthwith present an address to his Majesty, beseeching his Majesty not to allow the resignation of his Ministers, but forthwith to create a number of Peers, sufficient to insure the passing of the Bill of Reform, uninjured, into a law; and that your Honourable House will instantly withhold all supplies, and adopt any other measures whatever which may be necessary to carry the Bill of Reform, and to insure the safety and the liberty of the country.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

II.—That a Deputation, consisting of Joshua Scholefield, Joseph Parkes, and John Green, Esqrs., do proceed to London forthwith, to deliver the Petition to Daniel O'Connell, Esq.; and to communicate with the friends of Reform in London, and to report to the Council of the Political Union as early as possible.

III.—That the Members for the county of Warwick, together with Sir Francis Burdett, Bart., Joseph Hume, Esq., John Tomes, Esq., Bolton King, Esq., and Lord Viscount Ebrington, be requested to support Mr. O'Connell on the presentation of the Petition.

THOMAS ATTWOOD, CHAIRMAN.

#### BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION.

At a MEETING of the COUNCIL of the BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION, held at the Rooms of the Union, in Great Charles Street, this 10th day of May, 1832,

THOMAS ATTWOOD, Esq.,

IN THE CHAIR;

A body of gentlemen, to the number of 500 and upwards, from the News-room, and the town generally, comprising the professions and mercantile interests of the town, not already included in the Union having come forward with the following Declaration, and enrolled their names as Members of the Union in obtaining Parliamentary Reform:—

*Resolved,*—

“We, the undersigned, Inhabitants of the Town and Neighbourhood of Birmingham, who have hitherto refrained from joining the BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION, deem it our duty to our Country at this awful crisis to come forward and join that body for the purpose of promoting the further

union, order, and determination of all classes in support of the common cause of PARLIAMENTARY REFORM."

*It was resolved unanimously,—*

1st.—That the above Gentlemen be enrolled as Members of the Union, and that their names be printed and circulated throughout the town; and that the best thanks of the Council be given to them for their public spirit and patriotism.

2nd.—That the Members of the Political Union be invited to wear on their breasts the ribbon of the Union Jack, until the Bill of Reform becomes law; and that the friends of their country and of the cause of liberty, throughout the kingdom, be invited to do the same; and that all persons be requested to provide themselves with a piece of blue ribbon to wear on the breast until the Union Jack can be obtained.

By order of the Council,

THOMAS ATTWOOD, Chairman.

BENJAMIN HADLEY, Honorary Secretary.

W. Hodgetts, Printer, 16, Spiceal-street, Birmingham.

#### IMPORTANT SPEECH OF COLONEL JONES,

At the Great District Meeting of St. Pancras and Paddington, London.

Held at St. John's Wood, Monday, May 14, 1832.

JOSEPH HUME, Esq., M.P., IN THE CHAIR.

*(Extracted from the TIMES Newspaper, of May 15, 1832.)*

THE CHAIRMAN opened the Meeting by a long and excellent Speech, in the course of which he said, he had learned, that morning, that TROOPS WERE MARCHING ON THE METROPOLIS—(*Groans*). One of the most patriotic men in Brentford informed him that a regiment of the Guards had reached Brentford that morning.—(*hisses*).

COLONEL JONES moved the first resolution. It appeared from a statement of the worthy Chairman that the troops were gathering to the Metropolis. If this were the case, then the DUKE OF WELLINGTON HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO ACT ILLEGALLY. He (Colonel Jones) had inquired that morning of the Secretary at War, whether orders had been given for the marching of troops, and the answer was, that none had been issued—he had given no warrant. Now, he knew, as an old soldier, that none dare put the troops in motion without this authority. Therefore, if a battalion of the Guards had marched from Windsor, the order was illegal, and whether it had emanated from Lord Hill or the Duke of Wellington, they, one or both, DESERVED IMPEACHMENT, and he

hoped their representative would do his duty in the House of Commons, and ascertain by what authority, this movement had been sanctioned. He had heard also of troops marching from Portsmouth, and he had inquired of the highest authority, who was not cognizant of the fact. If, therefore, his information was correct, this was a declaration of war against the people. (*Hear.*) LET THE PEOPLE THEN BE PREPARED FOR WAR. He would tell them what was requisite,—first, SOBRIETY; secondly, OBEDIENCE to those whom they selected as leaders. Let only some of them determine to die, and away would go all the soldiers. (*Bravo.*) He would tell them, that if the whole brigade of household cavalry came, they had only to stand firm and lock their arms together, and no cavalry men could come near them. IF THE ARTILLERY WERE BROUGHT AGAINST THEM, HE WOULD PLACE HIMSELF AT THEIR HEAD, AND SHOW THEM HOW TO TAKE EVERY GREAT GUN. (*Cheers.*) In one or two instances of his life, he had led men in some of the most dangerous attacks; AND IF THE HORRID NECESSITY ARRIVED HE WOULD LEAD HIS COUNTRYMEN ON AGAIN. (*Immense cheering.*)

It had been reported that the Duke of Wellington had said, that if he got eight days and 10,000 men, he would put down the Reform question. (*Groans.*) He (Colonel Jones) would give him the benefit of the decimal: let him number the days by ten and the troops by ten—nay, he would endow him with the life of Methuselah, and yet he should not be able to put down Reform. (*Cheers.*) Reform, Reform was now part of an Englishman's life—(*tremendous cheering*)—and for Reform every good Englishman was ready to die. (*Cries of "All, all."*) The men in the north were ready to move against the invader of their liberties; but it was necessary for their brethren in the south to be prepared to receive them. God forbid that the necessity for their efforts should come. They would be best able to put down their enemies by quietness, for all they wanted was to butcher them if they could. It was better for the people to put their hands on their pockets, and let no man force them to pay the taxes. Let them only determine not to pay—they had the power in their hands, and they should use it. For himself, no money should come out of his pocket till the Reform Bill was passed. (*Cheers.*) HE WAS ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE ASSESSED TAXES AND THE LAND REVENUE, AND BY THE LIVING GOD HE VOWED NOT TO SIGN HIS NAME TO ANY PAPER FOR A DISTRESS ON THE GOODS OF THOSE WHO REFUSED TO PAY THE TAXES. (*Cheers.*) Let them observe peace and quietness, until driven to arms. He would tell them that Press the conjuror would put down Sword the giant. They happily had

nearly the whole of the press of England in their favour, nor should he turn his pen into a sword until he was compelled to do so. He would keep on with his pen which he hoped would still be useful,—he would keep on with it TILL THE SWORD WAS DRAWN AGAINST HIM, AND THEN, IN THE FACE OF HEAVEN HE SWORE TO GRASP HIS SWORD AND NEVER TO PART IT FROM HIS HAND UNTIL HIS LIFE WAS AT AN END, OR UNTIL THE CHANGES WERE EFFECTED WHICH THE PEOPLE REQUIRED. (*Cheers.*)

Barlow, Printer, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham.

#### GRAND MEETING OF ANTI-REFORMERS.

(*From the Times.*)

Where dark Corfe Castle's ruins lower,  
 An old Owl sat in an ivied tower,  
 Winking and blinking, and cursing the ray  
 That promised a bright and welcome day  
 To all but such foul birds of prey.  
 Around him in filthy troops were seen,  
 A hideous conclave of birds unclean ;  
 Owls, Hawks, Kites, Vultures, with hungry jaws,  
 And ravening stomachs, and harpy claws ;  
 All gather'd together, wild with fear  
 That the end of their pillaging reign was near ;  
 And Ravens were there, who, croaking loud,  
 With direful bodings alarm'd the crowd ;  
 And a band of noisy Rooks, with the cry,  
 Of "The Rookery in danger !" fly,  
 Screaming out "Thunder and robbery."  
 All frantic seem'd, and never yet  
 Such a legion of Anti-Reformers met ;  
 They voted the old Owl in the chair,  
 Who took his seat with a solemn air,  
 Then rose and spoke, in a voice of woe,  
 His large round eyes rolling to and fro :—  
 "We're met at an awful time, my friends,  
 "For a tempest over our heads impends ;  
 "I fear that our mousing trade is done,  
 "And our occupation gone.  
 "For a horrible demon they call Reform,  
 "Threatens our ancient haunts to storm,



" And our well-lined nests demolish, which  
 " Are foul, 'tis true, but with booty rich;  
 " And they'd pull the old pile about our ears,  
 " Where we've been so snug for many long years,  
 " But we'll set up a cry so loud and long,  
 " That the land shall ring with the fearful song.  
 " And we'll swear if they touch in evil hour  
 " One stone of one old crazy tower,  
 " Down the Throne and the Church will fall,  
 " Royal Palace and lordly hall,  
 " King and Bishops, and Peers and all.  
 " And to pigeons and booby birds we'll tell,  
 " That the system has, in effect, work'd well;  
 " But if we find humbug will not do  
 " With the radical, reforming crew,  
 " Let's fight as long as we've beak and claws,  
 " For our own good things, and the good old cause.  
 " Nor give up our 'vested interests'  
 " In our lawful spoil and our warm snug nests."  
 He ceas'd,—and a long and fearful yell  
 Along the old walls echoing fell;  
 Then cries of "Adjourn;" for a burst of day  
 Scared hawks, and kites, and vultures away,  
 And to deeper shades fled the birds of night,  
 That ever "love darkness better than light."

THE WARWICKSHIRE ADDRESS, OR THE BRUMMAGEM TORIES  
IN 1832.

Sung with great Applause at the late Political Union Dinner.

*Tune.—Hey Triangle derry down.*

Oh they've lately sent unto King Will  
 From Warwickshire a long address,  
 Against the Great Reforming Bill,  
 Indeed the Tories can't do less;  
 We've got in Print, yes all that's in't,  
 With the names that interline it sir,  
 And a pretty squad, say *Ninety Odd*  
 In Town they got to sign it, sir.  
 Then let us sing in Britain's praise,  
 And boast our former Glories, sir;

Whoever thought that we could raise  
Here, *such a Band of Tories!* sir.

O there's Lawyers Anster, Barker George,  
And Rawlins Sam, the Tanner, sir ;  
There's young Fred Burrish, printed large,  
With Bettridge, the Japanner, sir ;  
There's *Doctor* Darwell, *Doctor* Wood,  
And *Doctor* Covey, urging still  
Their Constitutions to be good  
Without *Lord Russell's Purging Pill*.

Then let us sing, &c.

There's Painter Heape, his name has signed  
With young Sam Haines, and Horton, sir,  
There's *Parsons, Lawyers*, plenty join'd,  
With others you'd ne'er thought on, sir ;  
There's Bowyer Vaux quite circumspect,  
Osborne too is in the lurch,  
And there's Rickman Tom, the Architect,  
That's him *wot plann'd St. Peter's Church*.

Then let us sing, &c.

There's young Holt too, has drop't his brush  
To sign with these great Gentlemen,  
And just to add the master touch  
*Peter Hollins* has used the Pen ;  
With Fowler, Gem, and Walthew John,  
There's Whateley the Church talker, sir,  
There's Wilkes, and the great Merchantman,  
Oh, that you say is *Walker*, sir.

Then let us sing, &c.

There's Jemmy Mason, and Jem Eades,  
There's Taylor, too, with Tommy Todd ;  
And Smallwood Will against the Bill,  
And Kempson's join'd the noble squad ;  
There's Parson Gardner, and what not  
All noodles belonging to 'em, sir,  
But who'd have thought that in their lot  
We find *Tom Paine* among 'em, sir,

Then let us sing, &c.

There's Isaac Lea, and Jacob, too,  
Belong to this communion, sir ;

And Machin Jack has signed we know,  
 Tho' he dearly loves the UNION, sir ;  
 There's Tommy Baldwin, Dicky Gale,  
 Bates, Boucher, and young Brown,  
 And as for *Bishops* I can tell  
 We've two that's *Tories* in the Town.  
 Then let us sing, &c.

There's Price, who figures much in Sums,  
 His zeal is forward putting, sir,  
 There's Deely Joe, that makes us Combs,  
 His teeth he's just done cutting, sir ;  
 We've Meredith and Simcox there,  
 Warner the Undertaker, sir,  
 And Parson Freer, from you know where,  
 And young Frank Lloyd the Quaker, sir.  
 Then let us sing, &c.

There's Ashton John fills up one blank,  
 With Armfield, and Will Bostill, sir,  
 And Atkins, too, has joined the rank  
 With his Mortar and his Pestle, sir ;  
 With Anderton, yes, haughty Will,  
 And further to assist our rhymes  
 There's Allport he's against the Bill,  
 And that's the man wot — the chimes.  
 Then let us sing, &c.

There's Hector Cooksey, and there's Cope,  
 Come out on this occasion, sir,  
 And *Doctor* Boulton lives in hope  
 By this to save the Nation, sir ;  
 To join in this Majestic job,  
 Jack Allcock in his name has cast,  
 And so has Simmons, Sam the Snob,  
 Who surely should have been the *last*.  
 Then let us sing, &c.

To sign, Dugard has left his shop,  
 And Beswick too could never lag, sir,  
 To join with Wheeler, aye and Thorpe,  
 Who painted the proud Union Flag, sir ;

There's Callow, too, the boy for pelf,  
With Newton in the muster,  
And Grace, the Workhouse graceless Elf,  
With Johnson the Dancing Buster.

Then let us sing, &c.

There's Lawyer Griffiths, and there's Bower,  
With Roberts Dick, we'll enter, sir ;  
There's Standley Ned, and Wilson Ted,  
With Billy Wood, the Printer, sir ;  
There's Neddy Palmer and Ned Smith,  
Ned Watts, and many more, sir,  
It's been some time, sir, since we saw  
Of NEDDY'S such a store, sir.

Then let us sing, &c.

The list thus fill'd, this long address  
To Town had to jog on, sir,  
And a deputation, nothing less,  
Went off in Shackell's Waggon, sir ;  
If they succeed when danger's past  
Of Reform us dispossessing, sir,  
No doubt but at the General Fast  
They'll have Tommy Moseley's *blessing*, sir.

Then let us sing, &c,

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Printed for T. Bland, Beck Street, Birmingham.

## CHAPTER IV.

"Be wary how you place your words,  
Talk like the vulgar sort of market-men,  
That come to gather money for their corn."

SHAKESPEARE.

It was at this period that I returned to Birmingham ; it was a great change to come from a quiet country town, to the volcano of an expected revolution. I took lodgings close to my place of business, and resolved to fill up my spare evening hours by becoming a member of the Mechanics' Institution, and my morning hours in learning the French language, by the aid of Levizac's grammar and a dictionary.

I say spare hours, but these were spared from sleep, as my business hours were early and late. I rose about half-past four in the morning, and very seldom went to bed before eleven o'clock at night. By this plan I accomplished my object. I was chiefly induced to do so from seeing so many letters arrive at the office from French merchants, all of which to me were as unintelligible as Greek.

There was one clerk who could translate, to whom I said nothing about my studies, but at last it came to his knowledge in a singular way.

It happened that he was absent on leave one day, when several letters came to hand from France. The senior partner opened them for the purpose of looking at the "bills of lading," and "drafts" inclosed. These he could make out only so far as the figures went, yet this must have been a satisfaction to him. He brought the letters after opening them into the clerks' office, and threw them on the desk without any remark.

It struck me that I could translate them with the help of my dictionary, so I fetched it, and whilst the head clerk was away I puzzled at them, and made them out pretty well with the exception of the quantities of the wheat put on board the vessels.

There was one thing that completely puzzled me—the bills of exchange. There were three for every amount, that is, one to be accepted and sent to the foreign merchant, one to be sent to his London agent, and the third copy to be kept by the acceptor. It was a long time before I understood how they could be considered as available as cash, but when I came to check off a bank book with a bill book, I saw that the cash had to be paid before the expiration of the time, as stated on the bill of exchange.

When I had completed the translations, such as they were, I took them up stairs to the senior partner. He was surprised, and asked me how and when I had studied French, I told him early in the morning and at night; he looked at them, and told me if I wished to make myself perfect, to find out a good master, and he would pay the cost.

This was very opportune, as I thought of attending a French class at the Mechanics' Institute for improvement. I made inquiries for a teacher, and fixed upon M. Chs. de Beaumont, a French refugee, living in Cannon Street.

He wished me not to study in Levizac's grammar, but as I had nearly got through it, I said I should not purchase nor study any other.

To this, after many shrugs and many a "Mon Dieu," he consented, and when I told him of the difficulties I had with the verbs, especially the impersonal, he very kindly said he would draw me out a perfect list of them, negative and otherwise.

So I went to work heartily, being fond of the language, and anticipating that its full acquirement would enable me to secure a much better position and salary than I then enjoyed.

When I had attended him for six months I joined the Mechanics' Institute, and entered the French class, which met twice a week. Soon after, one of the teachers left, and at the

request of the secretary, I took his place. This was a bold step, but I found that my three evenings a week with M. de Beaumont, soon qualified me to instruct others, and that I learned as much by teaching, as I did by being taught.

The institute had not been established many years; it was opened in 1826, so that it was in its apprenticeship when I became a member. In the first 30 years of this century Birmingham was making intellectual strides. The Theatre after 30 years of applications and refusals of licenses was opened in 1807,\* the Mechanics' Institute in 1826, and the Society of Artists in 1829.

Being very anxious to learn still more, I joined a club of young men, (who were nearly all members of the Institute,) for the purpose of writing essays, by turn, and reading them to the club. At these readings criticisms were allowed, and our intellects were rather sharpened by the early hour at which we met, viz., six o'clock until eight every Sunday morning.

An unusual and very unpleasant matter took place during this period at the Birmingham office. The price of wheat was very low in 1832, therefore the duty on foreign was very high; the importers consequently had their money locked up to a large amount with no prospect of getting a release. This being the case, an attempt was made by a coalition of the corn merchants in various English ports to raise the value of English wheat, by buying simultaneously most of the English samples offered on the largest markets.

This of course required a further large amount of money, and consequently heavy remittances per post were made to and fro

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\* Hutton, the Birmingham historian, says, that so far as memory could go, the strolling players occupied a wooden shed in a street where Temple Street now stands, afterwards in a booth in one of the Hinkleys, and in a stable in Castle Street, in 1730. At that date a Theatre was built in Moor Street, and then a larger one in King Street in 1752, which was not opened until the 5th of June, 1775. In this year the Theatre in New Street was built, but not opened. In 1777 an attempt was made to get an Act of Parliament passed to license it, which Edmund Burke supported, but it was rejected on the second reading. No license was obtained for it until 1807. It was burnt down in 1820, and re-opened in the same year.

by the operators. One of these remittances (amongst many from our office) was £1,000, in two bank of England notes of £500 each. The cashier inclosed them in a letter, sealed it up, and I took it to the post office.

This letter never reached the hands of the merchant at Liverpool to whom it was addressed, and strange to say the notes were presented and cashed at the Bank of England the next day, one half in small notes, the other half in gold.

The description given of the person that cashed them was, that he was military in appearance, and wore black clothes. This description suited the appearance and dress of my father, but as I knew I had posted the letter, I was easy in my mind. Nevertheless as I was the last person that had possession of it, and having been severely questioned about my having put the letter in the post office, I felt that I was suspected.

As time wore on and the letter nor any trace of it turned up, the parties called in an eminent lawyer, who examined the clerks at our office, and those at the office at Liverpool, to which it was addressed; this proved of no avail, and the parties agreed to divide the loss.

Some twelve months afterwards one of the small notes found its way to a Liverpool bank; this unexpected appearance was followed up by tracing, and it was at last found that a person known to a shopkeeper in that town, had paid for some goods with it; this person proved to be the mother of one of the clerks in the Liverpool office, and he was the person appointed to fetch the letters for the merchant; this gave a good clue, and the father, mother, and son were apprehended, they were tried in due time, and the father and son were transported.

During the period between their apprehension and their trial it was shown that the father, being short of money, had induced the son to commit the theft,—that he had been abroad to sell the notes but was unsuccessful, and when his house was searched, nearly all the notes were found, and a large amount of gold.

Thus the guilty and the innocent were set right, and the owners of the notes lost but little of the amount.



During this period I had several journeys to Gloucester by gig in the company of my master. It was a long pull for one day, but we started very early, calling at Worcester to change horses. The drive over the Lickey Hill, near Bromsgrove, although unpleasant to the horse from its steepness, was very pleasant to us.

Of course we had breakfast before we started from Birmingham, but we had another at an inn at a place called Stratford-Bridge, before we got to Tewkesbury. This inn was kept by a widow of the name of Benbow, whose departed husband had been a leading character in the district in promoting English sports, such as bull baiting, cock-fighting, and dog fighting. The room wherein we had to breakfast was no doubt the best parlour, as it contained many good paintings illustrating the sports to which the landlord had been so partial.

The landlady was very fond of telling us the value of the paintings, and said she would on no account sell any of them, as her husband had in his last moments laid an injunction upon her not to do so. She was a connoisseur in China-ware, and every cup, saucer, bowl, plate, and even the coffee pot, was of a different pattern. She was pleased with this variety, and I was as much pleased with her coffee, toast, and eggs, which were very good, and after a ride of some thirty-six miles very relishable.

Our journeys to Gloucester were to another establishment of the firm, to check off the stocks, examine them in the warehouses, pay duties, and give orders for what was to be sent forward. There were no railways then; every thing had to go up the country by the river Severn, some diverging up the Birmingham and Worcester Canal, at Worcester, some up the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal at Stourport, whilst some went on to Bewdley, for the West Worcestershire and Shropshire markets.

We generally returned on the same day, as Gloucester was a quiet port then. There were but two corn firms at that period on the Basin, as a vast quantity of the foreign corn supplied to the interior came from Bristol in the trows, and these of course passed by Gloucester on their way up the river.

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I got on famously with my French. I did too many exercises for the French master's patience, so I resolved to translate some French book, as well as I could. I therefore bought a French work called "Lafayette and the Revolution of 1830, by B. Sarrans," and translated three pages every day.

This plan of a little every day I adhered to in after life, and I found that it told up much better in the end than doing a larger quantity by fits and starts. I remembered reading that Cobbett adopted this plan and I followed it with success.

Thus by the instruction of the French master, the teaching of the French class at the Mechanics' Institute, and translating Lafayette, I advanced rapidly and firmly.

But this like my rhyming pursuits in Worcestershire was interrupted by my employer wishing me to go and reside at Gloucester, to help another brother of his to manage the business there. Although I did not at all relish parting with old friends, I concluded to go to Gloucester, as I thought it would improve my knowledge of the trade, and my prospects also.

Accordingly after bidding my relatives and friends good bye once more, to Gloucester I went. This was not so new a scene to me as the one was in Worcestershire, when I lost my trunk and top coat; but it proved more satisfactory in its varieties and responsibility.

It was in the middle of 1832 that I entered upon my new duties; they were various, especially as I had to arrange with captains of vessels from many parts of Europe, as to getting their cargoes discharged, and paying them their freight moneys.

The captains were not all natives of the United Kingdom, many were French, some Spaniards, some Russians, but the most friendly to me were the captains of the small Welsh vessels, as they insisted upon it that I must be a Welshman, from my name being Griffith. One of them was named Griffith Griffith, and he offered me a quarter of his vessel, that is a fourth share in her, and his only daughter for wife, if I would go and live at Carmarthen, and manage a general shop he had there, as his wife was dead.

We are asked "What's in a name," here is a good answer to it. I refused his kind offer, at which he was quite offended, and vowed in Welsh and English, that he would never bring another cargo to Gloucester so long as his name was Griffith.

After my settling down at Gloucester I received from an attached companion and fellow-member of the Birmingham Mechanics' Institute, a copy of a report published by that body, and a "vote of thanks" for my past services, in teaching the French class. This report was published after their spring quarterly meeting. The vote was as follows:—

VOTE OF THANKS.

"DEAR SIR,—I feel great pleasure in remitting to you the copy of a resolution passed at the general meeting of the French class, held on Monday evening last, viz., 'That the best thanks of this meeting be given to Messrs. Griffith and Woodward, for their attention to the French class.'

"Yours most respectfully,

"CHAS. LLOYD."

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REPORT OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

June 24, 1832.

On Thursday evening last, Mr. Goodall gave his concluding Lecture on Geology to the Members of this Institution. The Lecture, in fact, was supernumerary, consisting of a spirited abstract of Mr. Auldjo's account of his ascent of *Mont Blanc*, and was appropriate as a practical illustration of some of the facts and phenomena noticed in the former Lectures. The interest of the narrative was increased by the exhibition of a number of drawings, being copies of the vignettes which accompany the work, but magnified to a scale sufficiently large to be visible to the entire auditory.

After the close of the Lecture the half-yearly meeting of the Institution was held, at which six committee men were chosen in place of six who retire, financial statements produced, and a general report read. Mr. W. Hawkes Smith, Vice-President, in the Chair.

It appeared from the accounts produced, that the Institution is still incumbered with a balance of debt to the amount of nearly £150, which, although somewhat less than at the last report, is sufficient to give much uneasiness to the friends of the Institution, and excite the attention of those who from various causes have not been, or at present are not, its benefactors, in the way of honorary subscription.

The Report, which was read after the choice of the committee men had been made, and the accounts passed, is as follows :—

“Your Committee are happy in being enabled to report the advancing state of the general Subscription to this Institution; a proof that the conviction of its utility is becoming more prevalent among those who are invited to partake in its benefits. The increase may be stated to consist chiefly of young persons, who are anxious to avail themselves of those opportunities of obtaining information which the various classes and the library present. The classes, in consequence, have considerably increased in numbers during the past half-year. The attendance of the pupils has been regular, and their conduct orderly, considering the numbers in attendance; but your Committee are of opinion that a beneficial effect would result if some of the senior members of the Institution would occasionally attend as inspecting visitors, whose presence would greatly tend to preserve and enforce that perfect order and decorum which are so absolutely necessary when the work of instruction is proceeding. On the pupils also your Committee would endeavour strongly to impress the necessity of regular attendance on their respective classes, and of diligent occupation during the time so engaged. The opportunities afforded them of gaining information are, of course, circumscribed; and nothing but strong determination and sedulous perseverance can render the quantity of knowledge, thus obtained, considerable or effective.

“Your Committee have the satisfaction of stating, that Mr. W. Hawkes Smith still continues his attendance on the French class one evening each week; but they have to regret that Mr. George Griffith, who has hitherto attended on the Saturday evenings, has been called to another part of the kingdom, in consequence of which the class has been deprived of his valuable assistance. Impressed with the feeling that to the student of a foreign language the presence of a person who can in some degree assume the tone of a proficient is absolutely necessary, your Committee take this opportunity of requesting the assistance of any member or members of the Institution, whose knowledge of the language may enable them, and whose pursuits may allow them to devote a portion of one evening in the week to this object.

“At the commencement of the last quarter, a wish was expressed by several of the members of the French class to obtain some knowledge of the Latin language, an acquisition which seemed of importance to readers of every class, on account of the numerous terms and phrases from the Latin which abound in the scientific and other works which generally circulate. The proffered services of a young gentleman, who engaged to attend as Instructor, were gladly accepted; and your Committee have that

individual's permission to declare, that he feels much gratification from the obvious interest taken by the class in this new branch of study. The evenings of Monday and Saturday are now devoted to the French language and that of Friday to the Latin."

I was not long at Gloucester before I had to attend that market, and Tewkesbury also, regularly.

The days upon which these markets were held being Wednesday at the latter, and Saturday at the former, made the weeks very pleasant in the division of time. Thus I had two days between each market to attend to business at the office, to settle with the captains of the vessels, and give the captains of the river barges their freight notes.

I had to work hard, but I was never happier in my life; nevertheless I did not forget my French studies. Amongst the books that I bought was an Annual, containing short poems, in which I found a French piece entitled "*Le Captif*." I could read it so as to understand the meaning well enough, so I translated it into prose; this led me to think of translating it into verse, and sending it to the *Gloucester Journal* to be put in the "Poet's Corner."

Hereupon Crabbe's denunciation arose in full force, but I said to myself "Why should I not try, what is Crabbe to me? I will try."

I had, since reading Crabbe, met with Coleridge's poems, and found some encouragement in his piece, entitled "Youth and Age," wherein he says—

"VERSE—a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung feeding like a bee—  
Both were mine! Life went a-Maying  
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy."

I argued this point mentally for some days, and at last resolved to do it.

I found it much more difficult to translate into poetry than prose. After many sheets of paper had been used, I accomplished the task, I then sent it to the *Journal* with the simple initials "G.G." attached, and requested that it might be inserted therein if worth the editor's notice.

It appeared the very next Saturday, and I shall never forget the effect it produced upon my mind; *my first appearance in print*. I was overjoyed, especially as it had been a rather difficult task; I was so elated that day (12th August, 1833) that business was very badly attended to.

## LE CAPTIF.

SEE "POETIC OFFERING."

Partout on trouve en son chemin,  
 La peine attachée à la vie,  
 Mais on ne sent le vrai chagrin  
 Qu'en souffrant, loin de sa patrie !  
 Si quelquefois, un doux sommeil  
 Depeint la rive tant chérie,  
 Son âme est navrée au reveil,  
 De ne plus trouver sa patrie !  
 Lorsq'en invocant l'avenir,  
 Le Captif un moment s'oublie,  
 Sa chaîne excite un souvenir,  
 Le souvenir de sa patrie !  
 Si, par des êtres généreux  
 Il sent la douleur adoucie,  
 Son cœur un instant est heureux,  
 Mais il est loin de sa patrie !

## THE CAPTIVE.

TRANSLATION.

Whate'er the pain, whate'er the grief  
 We meet with in this world below,  
 Be it prolonged, or be it brief,  
 It equals not the Captive's woe ?  
 His only comrades, chains and toil,  
 His frequent prayer—" Oh ! let once more  
 The fettered Captive tread the soil,  
 The borders of his native shore."  
 His o'ercharged eyes with sorrow worn,  
 Deceive him as in dreams he sees  
 The peaceful cot where he was born,  
 The fav'rite stream, the well-known trees ;

But when aroused to daily toil,  
 Alas ! unto his eyes no more  
 Appear the Captive's native soil,  
 The borders of his native shore.

When night prevails, his fearful doom  
 Draws fervent prayers from his soul,—  
 " May liberty break through this gloom,  
 And crush the Captive's bitter bowl."  
 His broken hopes but add to toil,  
 His chains cry out " Ah ! never more  
 Shalt thou behold thy native soil,  
 Or tread upon thy native shore."

But yet, amidst this hopeless scene,  
 Some soul more gen'rous than the rest,  
 By fondness tries his grief to wean,  
 By friendship hopes to soothe his breast.  
 Fondness, alas ! is useless toil,  
 Friendship but makes him think the more  
 Of friends that tread his native soil,—  
 Of fond ones on his native shore.

Having finished the translation of *Lafayette*, I bought "*Quesnel's Reflections on the Gospel of St. Matthew*," and as it contained just 365 pages I proposed to myself to translate one page per day, to which I strictly adhered, and accomplished it in twelve months.

I was in the habit of going occasionally on Sundays, to the service at the Cathedral. It was a very dull affair, and seemed to be a very indifferent matter to the performers—preachers, readers, and choristers all alike. I could not approve, in my own mind of such a body of persons, clerical and lay going through the service with an audience generally of some twenty or thirty people. The whole matter agreed with *Hugh Miller's* words as applied by him to the *Manchester Cathedral* services, "heavy inattentive decency;" in fact it was a petrification of religious worship. I knew most of the minor Canons who chanted the services, and was struck at the absence of their families. I sometimes asked them why they did not attend to

help to fill the pews; all I could get in reply was, that they went elsewhere, and that they themselves did not care much about it, as they were so badly paid.

Truly as the Bishop said in a sermon I heard him preach, the first time I attended the Sabbath service there, "this was a utilitarian age;" but he never said a word about the inutilitarian Cathedral body; he descanted not upon the sacred duties imposed on the Dean and Chapter, nor ever once alluded to their negligence of the true glory of their Cathedral

The Dean had no duty to perform except that of receiving his stipend; the Canons resided but three months in each year by turns, and spent the other nine months in fat Rectories and Vicarages at distant places; they cared nothing for the great city of Gloucester or its inhabitants, the place which when London was styled a burgh, or borough, bore the high title of City. Here William I. kept Christmas; here William Rufus refused audience to King Malcolm III. of Scotland; here King Stephen was brought captive; here Robert of Gloucester died; here King John loved to reside; here King Henry III. was crowned with a plain chaplet of gold, received homage from Prince David ap Llewellyn, and held a Parliament in 1241. Here Edward II. recovered the city from the hostile barons; here Richard II. and Henry IV. held Parliaments; here Synods and Ecclesiastical Councils had been held in ancient days. But what were all these bye-gone glories of Gloucester to the inert Dean and Chapter?

The modern Synods were the Audits, when the Chapter met. They screwed the salaries of the minor Canons, Schoolmasters, Organist, and others as low as ever they could, to fill their own purses. They preached against the love of the world, the flesh, and the devil in others, and thus compounded—

"For sins they were inclined to

By damning those they had no mind to."

These memories of the city and its Cathedral often incited me to view the exterior—the west front is superior to most others—the large panelled buttresses, with their rich clustered pinnacles, the pierced parapet and the moulding of the great widow, strike



the beholder with wonder and awe. Where are your Cathedral architects now-a-days," "what are they doing?" Why, building and embellishing Palaces for Bishops. Well did the motto on the dial of this ancient Cathedral say—

"Pereunt et imputantur."

Verily, the sixty Cathedral stalls were of no use; the minor Canons were lost in them, and the Canons by turns vacated them for three-fourths of the year; and, as to the Choir, what had the figures of the heavenly host over the high altar, singing lustily to instruments of music to do with their listless devotion? The whole body of officials might have been taken for the inhabitants of a Cathedral (not a Castle) of Indolence.

"Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound!  
Whose soft dominion o'er this "Service" sways,  
And all the widely-silent places round,  
Forgive me if my trembling pen displays  
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.  
But how shall I attempt such arduous string,  
I who have spent my nights and nightly days  
In this soul-deadening place, loose loitering;  
Oh! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?"

The contrast between the Dean and Chapter and the Cathedral building, created a great admiration for the latter in my mind. Its examples of Norman Decorated, and Perpendicular architecture, particularly of the first-named, were sources of great delight to me. I used to wander out to Highnam, and Robin's Wood, and the Churchdown Hills, to get distant views of it; on one occasion I went as far as Birdlip, a lovely spot for this purpose, where I realised the reason why Talfourd said that the valley in which the City and its Cathedral stand, "was superior to the descent of the Jura for its lovely and interesting succession of pictures."

The interior I oftentimes visited on week days, and wandered through the Nave with its eight bays, the Transept with its apsidal Chapel, the Central Tower with its Choir of five bays and aisles, and eastern processional path, with an apsidal chapel on either side, and the cruciform Lady Chapel.

There had been fifteen chapels, arranged in five groups of three each, one above the other, *i.e.*, one group in the Crypt, one opening into the processional path, and the third into the triforium; but of the central and eastern group, the Crypt Chapel only remained when I resided in Gloucester.

The West Door, too, with square head and quatrefoils, containing shields, on which were the arms of England and the Abbey, as the Cathedral was called in its earlier days, and the small figure of a prelate over the tympanum of the West Window bestowing the blessing, were great favourites with me.

But beyond every thing the Tower was my delight; sumptuous, stately, and richly ornamented, without sacrificing simplicity, and though very massive, yet admirable from the lightness and elegance of its proportions. The Choir and Presbytery were also wonderful to behold, and the eastern window, far superior in magnificence to that at York, with its graduated buttresses and its flowing canopy, terminated in a finial containing a small crucifix, filled up the grand reality. And yet this great architectural triumph contributed but little to the benefit of the inhabitants, either morally, or substantially! yes, either morally or substantially. In olden times great numbers of poor scholars were taught in the grammar school free of cost, and fed free also, and were allowed a stipend for clothes, whilst in 1833 they were charged a fee, and the stipend was the same in amount as when Henry VIII. established it. He ordered the boys' stipends to be increased *pro rata* with the stipends of the canons, but the Dean and Chapter *overlooked* this part of the foundation charter, and applied the whole surplus to their own uses.

In olden times the poor were relieved bountifully, the city bridges and the roads were repaired, and bedes-men were supported out of the Cathedral funds, but those payments were also *overlooked*, to the great benefit of the Dean and Chapter. In olden times fit boys were sent to the Universities and provided for there, at the expense of the cathedral funds, but in modern times they too were *overlooked* to the great benefit of the Dean and Chapter. In olden times the Dean and Chapter and the school

boys dined together in the Guest-Hall, and when Parliaments were held at Gloucester, the Lords occupied the Refectory, the Commons the Guest-Hall, and the Privy Council the Guest-Chamber, and all the expenses were paid out of the Cathedral funds. In olden times the Monks were the architects, and often joined the workmen in repairing the edifice with their own hands, and they kept hounds and falcons, and associated with the people in all their harmless amusements, but now the Dean and Chapter are scarcely known to the inhabitants, and, in the words of a great poet, we may exclaim—

“The mighty deep doth slowly creep  
Upon the shore where we did play;  
The very sand where we did stand  
A moment since, swept far away.”

But enough about the Cathedral. My duties every day became more various. I had to go to Birmingham occasionally to help to post up the office books. On one occasion I was there for a week, and lived at my employer's house. The simplicity of this establishment was remarkable to me; a chapter or two of the Bible was read before breakfast, every morning, and to this the servants were summoned; there was no exhibition of cant or puritanical conversation; all the household were staid and respectful to each other.

I may mention here that the only firms in the corn trade who occupied warehouses and offices on the Basin at that time, were my employers, and Messrs. Wait, James, and Co., of Bristol, who had established a branch there under the management of Mr. J. P. Kimberly. We had it all to ourselves, and the imports increased to such an extent, that some times we had not warehouse room enough to unload the vessels in due time; for this demurrage of a certain sum per day had to be paid, according to the size of the vessel, added to which we had plenty of abuse at the hands of the captains, for not doing what it was impossible to do, viz., unload their vessels.

At this time the corn-law was in operation, and duty had to be paid according to the rules of the “Sliding Scale,” i.e., as corn

rose on the English markets the duty went down, and as it fell, the duty went up.

I had to pay the duty in most cases, and on one occasion a vessel was coming up the Berkeley Canal loaded with pease, the very day before the duty was to rise, but did not make her appearance so soon as we expected. This was rather exciting, so I arranged to hire a horse, gig, and driver to go down the turnpike road (which was nearly parallel with the Canal), whilst I went down the canal side on horse-back, so as to get the captain and the ship's papers to the gig, and then up to the Custom House before four o'clock.

I met the vessel about half way down the canal, and hailed her; the mate bellowed out that the captain was in the cabin shaving himself. I shouted that he must come ashore, on which the mate went below to him, and the captain came on deck half shaved. Being a Dutchman he could speak but very little English; he began by saying that he should not come. I told him he would have a fee if he would do so, but not unless he did so at once; at this he came ashore, and I managed, after some coaxing, to persuade him to get up on the horse behind the saddle, which as soon as he had done I trotted away.

We crossed the canal on a bridge a little way down, and soon reached the turnpike road, but we had to go some two or three miles before we met the gig. The country people seeing us on one horse were astonished, and many of the juniors ran after us shouting, hurrahing, and exclaiming that I had got a prisoner for Gloucester gaol. When we met the gig the captain was in a sad plight, through riding on the crupper, especially as the horse was a high trotter, and went very fast. He insisted that he must call at the very first barber's shop that he came to in Gloucester, to get the beard off the other side of his face, before going to the Custom House, to this I assented to prevent altercation, but I took him to the place I wanted him to go to first, viz., the Custom House, at which he flew into a passion, but the renewal of the promise of a fee calmed him down, and the duty was paid just in time.

During this period there was a good deal of complaint made of the management of the Free School, attached to the Church of St. Mary-de-Crypt. This school had then the largest endowment in the county, yet high fees were charged, and consequently the number of scholars was small.

It was founded by John Cooke, an alderman, in 1528; he was a Catholic, and he ordered in his Deed of Bequest that the school-master should be a priest, who in addition to his duties as school-master, was to say mass, and evermore to pray for the souls of the said John Cooke, his family, and all Christians.

His widow conveyed the school properties (as bequeathed by her husband) to the Corporation of Gloucester for the use of the school, but she stipulated that laymen, as well as priests, should be eligible for the office of schoolmaster.

An endowment for an usher was established in the year 1611, but it ceased in 1737. In 1683, George Townsend founded eight scholarships at Pembroke College, Oxford, one of which was given to this school. The land bequeathed by Cooke, the original founder, contains 466 acres, and the gross income at this time was about £800. The Townsend scholarship was worth £75 per annum, with rent-free rooms, and was tenable for four years. Of the £800 income about £150 was paid to almspeople, and for the repairs of Westgate Bridge, as ordered by the founder.

With all this money, and the school rent-free, very few boys were educated, and although the inhabitants wanted to throw the school open, and make it more of a commercial than a classical establishment, they could not do so unless they appealed to the Court of Chancery.

As they dreaded that monster, the evils were allowed to go on, and thus instead of benefitting the children of the people, it only benefitted the master, whose classical conscience would not allow him to make the school useful for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Finding that my salary was not advanced in amount, I began to look about for a more remunerative situation. My knowledge of the trade was becoming more perfect, so I gave a notice of

six months, to leave at Midsummer, 1834; but a promise being made that if the corn trade improved, my salary should be increased, I remained until Midsummer, 1835, when finding it could not be fulfilled, I gave notice again, and left at Christmas.

Between that Midsummer and Christmas I made an arrangement with Messrs. Biddle and Bishop, to attend markets for them, at an increase of £50 per annum, with a house and garden rent-free, into the bargain.

This firm lived at Stroudwater, they were millers, or more properly mealmen, in a very large way of business, and they wished to add the corn trade to it.

Here was a change of my own seeking, and it proved a very agreeable one. My duties were to attend Bristol, Gloucester, Tewkesbury, and Cheltenham markets; to go occasionally to Wales and Ireland, and for the first five days in each month, to take the Worcestershire and Staffordshire journey.

This had the effect of putting a stop to any opportunities for writing or studying for my own gratification. On three of the Tuesdays in every month I had to rise between three and four o'clock, to go to Bristol with the junior partner.\* We had breakfast before starting, and went by gig. These were very pleasant journeys, although fully of eighteen hours' duration. The partner drove as far as Newport, where we left our horse and took a hired one on to Bristol. I then drove through Thornbury and the Vale of Berkeley, to call on customers. This was a delightful run; it was a great treat to see in the early morning the horses of Earl Fitzhardinge called up to their corn, which was placed in short mangers fastened to the trees in the Park; each of the mangers was only long enough for two horses, and as it often happened that three horses would go to one manger,

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\* The senior partner used to waken me in the morning, by rattling at my bed-chamber window, with a lantern fastened to a long pole; he was an indefatigable man, and had risen in the world from being a baker's boy by his own industry. Mr. Watts, the chief banker in the town, owned the mill and land surrounding it, and being very fond of him, advanced any sum when he wanted to lay in a large stock in the face of rising markets.

there ensued a regular battle between them until one resigned and went elsewhere.

We usually reached Bristol at about nine o'clock, and having left the hired horse at a livery stable, we adjourned to the Apple-Tree Inn, in Broadmead, for our second breakfast.

We then parted, one of us taking the Clifton side of the city, and the other the Old Market side, to call upon the flour customers. This was the largest flour consuming place in our district, the bakers supplied every household with bread, as no private baking was then thought of; consequently the sales were very large, especially when a rise was anticipated, and the cash was always ready in due time, because of the bakers having all the trade in their own hands. We used, on an average, to collect about two thousand pounds a week, and leave it at the branch Bank of England, as it would not be safe to carry it with us.

On our return we sometimes diverged (after changing horses at Newport) and called on other customers. These were the days of stage coaches, stage waggon, post chaises, gigs, and vehicles of every kind. In our trade we had one waggon drawn by seven horses, besides several others, three gigs and horses, two river barges, and two canal boats.

The roads were all alive, except for the first part of our morning drive. We used to waken up the turnpike keepers with a brass horn, and reproach them for their laziness; and altogether, between the fresh air on the road, the walking in the city, good food, and a good trade, we were as lively as larks.

The corn trade increased and I went to Ireland to make purchases. Before doing so the senior partner told me he would give me a letter of introduction to a friend of his living at Waterford, and he wished me to take him a good cheese as a present. I bought one weighing 84lbs., three years old, and of the very best double Gloucester quality. The steam packet started from Bristol at four o'clock in the evening, on the 31st of August, 1836; it was a splendid autumn evening and the sea was pretty smooth.

The cabin passengers were various, and almost all in couples,

I do not mean married, but in their occupations, or religious denominations. There were two female members of the Society of Friends, two Catholic Priests, two young Middies of the navy, two Jews, two Commercial Travellers, and one Bishop of the protestant church, returning to his diocese (Ossory). We were all very social except the bishop; one of the Middies said the Bishop should have taken a steam packet for himself, as he was so ungregarious. He ordered his dinner to be put on a small table by itself, and had his own livery servant to wait upon him. The two Middies kept us alive with anecdotes connected with the service, and we enjoyed our dinner very much, the two Priests joining heartily in the general conversation.

After a time most of the company went on deck, to chat and look about them, but as the wind began to rise this did not last long, and the captain, seeing that a storm was brewing, very kindly invited us to adjourn to the cabin, and have some wine and biscuits as a compliment.

To this we all assented, and he took the head of the table for an hour or so, and then left us to ourselves, as he said he should be wanted on deck. None of us stirred until about ten o'clock, the first being one of the Jews, who, from the increased rolling of the vessel, began to feel queer. On his attempting to go on deck he found that the cabin head was fastened down, and the steward told us that no one would be allowed to go up until the storm was over. Thereupon some took to their berths and some to the sofas, the bishop and myself being two of the latter.

As the night wore on the storm increased; the sea water found its way into the cabin, and every now and then the sofa occupiers were found sprawling on the floor like drunken men, and as helpless as children. Among the latter was the proud Bishop of Ossory, nature paying no respect to his mitre, nor to his stomach.

He was very ill, and asked me to call the steward to his aid, to which I replied, that as he had a decided objection to dine with me, I had a decided objection to wait upon him, adding that his livery servant was in the adjoining berth, to whom he could call. He did so, but the servant either could not, or would not hear,



so that his lordship was thrown about by the ungentlemanly action of the vessel, quite as badly as the poor despised laymen.

At length the storm abated, and by the time we neared Waterford had taken itself off; but what a sight was the state of the cabin, and the cabin passengers! Everything broken, my new white hat turned to a dirty brown; the two Jews, who were very corpulent, considerably diminished in size, except their faces, which were a good deal swollen from the violent retching they had endured. The Bishop was a sight to behold, he was regularly dismantled, his clothes were all saturated, and his wig in a most bewildered state. The young Middies touched their caps and asked him how he had passed the night, hoping (most profanely) that he had not been troubled during the storm with thoughts of being lodged in a whale's belly.

At length and at last we landed, and away most of us went to Curnin's Hotel on the Quay. Breakfast time (nine o'clock) met us as we entered, but no breakfast, and having had ample time to digest our previous day's dinner, we were not only hungry but ravenous.

We were a pretty set of scarecrows, and under the landlord's guidance, whilst the breakfast was being prepared, we went upstairs and washed our dejected countenances, and combed our dishevelled locks. Never did I eat such a breakfast in my life, it was four-fold, and even when finished my stomach still, like *Oliver Twist*, asked for more.

A new suit of clothes bought on purpose to shine with in Ireland was duly drawn forth from my trunk before I sat down to dinner; the trowsers were of a pale buff, the waistcoat was a quilted cross-bar of the same colour, and the coat a bright green, bedizened with a pretty considerable quantity of gilt buttons of an ornamental pattern. Whilst I was dressing, I sent for a barber to bring my sea-weed hair into shape, not ship-shape, for that was the shape it was in, but into land shape. He was a queer customer to look at, both in physiognomy and dress. He never would have been taken for a hair-dresser, his own hair being in a most undressed state, but this perversion is not uncommon in other

trades and professions. A shoemaker is often badly shod, a tailor badly clothed, and watch makers generally carry a penny watch bought at a fair.

I looked at him with surprise, and he looked very inquiringly at me. He stared very intently at the green coat, and so soon as he began his operations opened his discourse by recommending me to one Mr. McCormick, as the right person to buy my powder and shot from. I told him that I did not want any, but he took this evidently as a joke, remarking that as this was the first of September, and I had "the real thing itself," a green coat, that to shoot was surely the cause of my coming to Ireland.

All I could say to the contrary had no effect, shooting I came (in his opinion) to pursue, and shoot I must.

As I came down the stairs to breakfast, the hair-dresser was at the front door talking to another person; on my turning into the breakfast room they both approached bowing, and the stranger handed me a card with the name of McCormick on it, and in large letters "Depôt for Hounslow Powder and Shot." I told him that I did not want either, but he seemed doubtful, and in a hesitating manner, said that he hoped I would call at his shop.

We had a late dinner, and during the conversation I told the landlord about the cheese I had with me, that it was first rate, and that I had brought it over the water for a friend of my employers. I asked him if he knew Mr. Patrick Ryan, and he said that he did well, but that he had gone to live at Hamburgh, about a month ago. I thereupon said that I should sell it before I left Waterford, as I had to go into the interior. He said that if it was of good quality he would buy it, so I told him he should see it the next morning; he replied that he should like to taste it when dinner was over. This I agreed to, and when it was produced every one at the table tasted it, and pronounced it to be prime. I left the price to him, as I only wanted to get rid of it, and the price he paid me was one third more than it cost. Upon this, I put two thirds in my pocket, and ordered punch in

to the amount of the other third ; after this was drunk the company ordered in more and more, and we did not break up until four o'clock in the morning. The landlord then proposed a general wash, and coffee and anchovies, and to conclude the whole he offered to drive us on two cars to Tramore Bay (some six or seven miles) to have a swim in the salt water.

To this we all assented, and away we went at half-past five. It was a splendid autumn morning, the air was as mild as new milk, the sky cloudless, the road good, and the horses of superior mettle. The landlord drove the first car, and I drove the second, and as we dashed on at a slapping pace, we soon reached the Bay.

We were not long before we were in the water, and up to our throats, not only in punch, but in the mixed waters of the Irish Coast and St. George's Channel. The refreshing effects of the sea water put us in excellent spirits, and the return journey was redolent of songs and jokes.

Having to wait instructions from the "Home Office," which had not arrived, I sauntered through the town. The bridge is a very fine one of 39 arches. Whilst I was standing upon it my friend the hair-dresser came up, and asked me if I thought the birds this "sayson" would be plentiful. I said I hoped so ; he then informed me that he had a son fourteen years of age, that would be very useful to me in my shooting rambles, and whose services I could have without anything more than his food. Here I was inclined to get angry, but turned the conversation by asking him what the Irish name of Waterford was ; he said it was anciently "Cuanna-Grioth" the Haven of the Sun, but that after the bloody battles with the Danes it was called "Gleann-na-Gleodh" or the "Valley of Lamentation." He pointed to the lower end of the quay where a Danish Tower stood, known by the founder's name, "Reginald," the son of Imar, who built it in 1003, and who then had possession of the town, but that in 1171 Strongbow, when he took it, destroyed all the Danes with the exception of the Prince and a few of his followers. He then began again about the shooting, and I got rid of him by saying that if I wanted any help I would send for his son.

I made some inquiries as to the Endowed Schools belonging to Waterford, and found that they were eleven in number, viz., first, a Blue School for protestant girls, where they were educated, clothed, and apprenticed free of charge, and also received portions when they were married; second, the Corporation Free School, to which the corporation elected four free boys, all the other boys paid fees; they were of all denominations, both boarders and day boys. I found that the premises were situated in a low bad part of the town. Thirdly, the chief Free School was that founded by Bishop Foy.

In the year 1707, Doctor Nathaniel Foy, formerly Bishop of Waterford, founded a school for "the teaching of the children of the poor gratis, and to clothe and apprentice them when fit for trades, and he ordered that "their number should be increased as the school revenues increased." On account of the mismanagement of the school an Act passed in 1808 for its better regulation. The Bishop and Dean, and the Mayor of Waterford were appointed to be the Trustees thenceforth. In 1833 the Commissioners of Municipal Corporations in Ireland, stated that the school was formerly situated in Waterford, and was a pure day school, but that by an Act 48, George III., a new school was built one mile and a half from the city, at Ballymakil, in which the boys were lodged and fed. The resident Bishop had the appointment of the master in his own hands. When I was at Waterford the net rental was £1,200 per annum (in 1855 it reached £2,547), and yet with this large sum only thirty to forty boys were taught, fed, and clothed, in a very indifferent manner. The foundation was strictly for protestant boys. The two masters I found were father and son. The premises cost in erecting some £6,000, to which there were sixteen acres of land attached.

The masters lived on the premises, and in addition to their salaries they boarded free, and had servants to attend to the establishment; a clergyman and a physician were also in attendance. The diet per boy cost 5½d. a day, and an apprentice fee of £8 was given in each case when they left school.

The Bishop and Dean, from absenteeism, very seldom visited

the school, and so from top to bottom, all was loose and irregular,

Although so well endowed I found the whole management to be the cause of general complaint, especially in the food department; it was no uncommon thing for the mothers of the boys to hang about the school doors, and when the master or housekeeper appeared, to give them "a bit of their mind." The food was short in quantity—too fat on one day, and too lean on another—and one mother said that "thru enough, the parsnips were good, but who could ate parsnips steamed in a boiler?" "The stir-about wasent done enough, and as sour as vargis; there were worms in the mate, and the bread was mouldy, and wasent half baked."

That was one side of the question; on the other the head master said that the boys were fed so well that only one had died in eleven years, and that singular to say of all the boys who had left the school for the previous eleven years only one behaved badly in after life. This was a very singular arithmetical coincidence. As to the food, the boys, he said, were so overdone with it, that they used to barter the surplus with the apple-women in the streets after school hours!

The master certainly had a terrible life of it; he was blamed for everything, and it being well known that he was a bad speller, that defect was often thrown in his teeth. "Well," he would say, "What does it matter how I spell, so long as I teach the boys to spell rightly from the books they have!" He was often censured too, for the dirty appearance of the boys, and for not allowing them to bathe; that practice he considered was quite unnecessary and a great offence, and for which, if he heard of it, he flogged the boys unmercifully!

Bishop Foy ordered the school to be a mere day school, which of course would have been much more beneficial to the inhabitants, but as there can be no doubt that he accumulated his money out of the Irish lands in an unjust manner, so his trustees thought it no sin to throw it away on a very expensive but almost

useless boarding house. The proverb "Badly got, badly spent" belongs peculiarly to the Irish Protestant Schools.

The other eight schools being of no great note I did not go near them, especially as I had to go off to Clonmel at an early hour on the next morning.

From inquiries that I had made the same day in Waterford, I found that the principals of the corn trade carried on there, lived at Clonmel, and on receiving "Orders" the next day I took a car from the hotel for that place. Before we reached Carrick, which is about half way to Clonmel, one of the wheels of the car came off, and I had to walk on, but I sent the driver with the horse on before me to get another car ready. When I reached Carrick I found that it was market day, and on entering an Inn I asked what I could have for dinner; the landlady said anything I liked; I said steaks—no steaks to be had; mutton chops—no chops; but she would get me a chicken and bacon; to this I could not dissent, as she had nothing else, although she had said I could have whatever I liked.

I walked up the main street; there were several women from the country with churns full of buttermilk, surrounded by customers; there were also several cobblers sitting on their stalls, mending shoes and telling jokes to the owners of the shoes, who were waiting to take their turns; these, with some poultry and onion stalls constituted what was called the market.

Whilst I was sauntering about the car driver came to me with a rueful countenance, and said he could not get a car, "devil a one's at home" said he, "so I must take the horse back to the car and bring it up as well as I can to get it mended." This was rather annoying, so I told him if he did not start to Clonmel in an hour I would not have his car, nor pay him a penny. This sharpened him up, for by the time I finished my dinner he was ready for the start. On inquiry I found that he had had nothing to eat, so I ordered him some whisky to drink, and a leg off the fowl, and a thick slice of bread, which very quickly disappeared.

We reached Clonmel safely at last, and he drove me to the Head Inn.

The next morning I made some heavy purchases, and as it was Saturday I remained until Monday morning. On the Sunday evening I found many rows of men in the main street, waiting to be hired as farm labourers, and as I was standing looking at them, all of a sudden an altercation sprung up, and reaping hooks and other dangerous weapons were instantly made use of. I could not move from the astonishment I felt at the suddenness of the onset. The women too rushed from the neighbourhood and joined in the *melée*, so that what with their shrieks and the men's violent ejaculations, nothing that was said was in the least intelligible to me. The police (called Peelers from being established by an Act, of which Sir Robert Peel was the chief mover) were quickly on the spot, but they could not quell the disturbance, so the soldiers were sent for, and by their aid a number of the men were captured and taken to the gaol.

Clonmel is one of the large inland towns of Ireland. The river Suir is navigable between this place and Waterford; it separates the counties of Tipperary and Waterford, Clonmel being in the former. Laurence Sterne, one of the favourite writers of his time, was born here in 1713. The population when I was there was about 10,000, and woollen works and flour mills were the chief establishments for the employment of the people.

Clonmel being the assize town for the county is a busy place. The river Suir runs through it, and the bridge has twenty arches. The town partly stands on Moire and partly on Long Islands, which are connected with the mainland by three bridges. There is a tradition as to the name of the town which states that some of the gigantic inhabitants of early Ireland wishing to fix upon a place to erect a camp, let off a swarm of bees, which settled on a spot near the present site of the town, and on it was erected an ancient circular fort, seen at the present day. It then assumed the name of "Cluain-mealla, the "Plain of Honey," and on this spot a castle was afterwards built. In 1650 Cromwell besieged it, and it was not until he had lost 2,000 men that the garrison capitulated; he then demolished the castle and fortifications, of which now only the ruins remain.

It was at Clonmel that Mr. Bianconi first established his system of cheap car-travelling, a reformation very much needed at that time. During my stay here I visited all the large flour mills, and was invited to dine at Mr. Malcolmson's, one of the most wealthy flour and corn merchants in Ireland, and a member of the Society of Friends. I found here and elsewhere in Ireland that the Friends were Tories, this I was much surprised at as the English Friends were nearly all Liberals. The dinner table was covered with plate, and the conversation was chiefly on the state of trade, which had been very much depressed, indeed so much so that Mr. Malcolmson assured me that even with the advantage of a special trade with London, he had gained no profit for the previous twelve months.





## CHAPTER V.

" 'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower  
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume ;  
And we are weeds without it. All constraint,  
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,  
Is evil."

COWPER ON " LIBERTY."

" Bleed, bleed, poor country !  
*Great tyranny*, lay thou thy basis sure,  
For goodness dares not check thee."

SHAKESPEARE.

ON our journey to Dublin we passed through Tipperary, Limerick, Maryborough, and Kildare, the distance being about 130 Irish miles. On the whole of this route the coachman (with whom I sat) pointed out various remarkable sites. Near to Limerick "The City of the Violated Treaty," was the seat of the Earl of Derby ; part of the city walls were then standing, and the treaty stone on which the articles of capitulation were signed between Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan, and General De Ginkel was still there ; the Cathedral with its steeple 120 feet high, from whence a cannon played on the besiegers with great effect, stood up boldly ; and the ruins of the castle built in the the time of King John, with its massive towers, seven of which were still standing. The Shannon (240 miles long), the noblest river in Ireland, runs through Limerick. It has since been the subject of the following beautiful sonnet by Sir Aubrey de Vere :—

" River of billows ! to whose mighty heart,  
The tide wave rushes of the Alantic sea—  
River of quiet depths ! by cultured lea,

Romantic wood, or city's crowded mart—  
 River of old poetic founts ! that start  
     From their lone mountain cradles, wild and free,  
     Nursed with the fawns, lull'd by the woodlarks glee ;  
 And cushat's hymeneal song apart !  
     River of chieftains, whose baronial halls,  
 Like veteran warders, watch each wave-worn steep,  
     Portumna's towers, Bunratty's regal walls,  
 Carrick's stern rock, the Geraldine's grey keep—  
     River of dark mementoes—must I close  
     My lips with Limerick's wrongs—with Auhgrim's woes !”

At Maryborough (so called in honour of Queen Mary, on account of her separating it from the King's County) we saw the ruins of the castle built by the Earl of Pembroke. At Kildare (the City of the Saints) we passed the fine ruins of the Cathedral, where the coachman told me the Nuns had maintained a perpetual fire for one thousand years for the benefit of poor strangers, and which was finally put out he said by that “ould black-guard, Henry VIII., bad cess to him,” he also pointed to the Round Tower, which he described as 110 feet high.

From what I saw then and since in Ireland, it appears to me that the English Laws have operated as a great curse on that down-trodden and misgoverned country. Plunder and rapine in the name of religion have been carried out to a barbarous extent, even the Scriptures having been made the excuse for all sorts of tyranny unequalled in any age or country in Europe. No wonder then that the Irish people hate the Sassenachs most cordially. Ecclesiastic domination, absentee landlordism, and penal laws have done their worst in Ireland for three centuries, without one single redeeming feature.

The English Parliament, especially the House of Lords, were greedy in passing laws to confiscate the land belonging to Catholics ; they fought against the natives in the name of the “Lord of Hosts.” They robbed and devastated without equity or mercy, with the sword in the one hand and the Bible in the other, and many of them even pleaded the example of Cromwell, who they said was a God-fearing man.

The day will come when retribution must and will fall on England for such merciless outrages and unparalleled tyranny, as those carried out for centuries by her against the Sister Kingdom.

I can only say of Dublin, at that period, that it pleased me much better than London. The Bay is considered to be the finest in Europe, except that of Constantinople. I was disappointed at the Corn Exchange, it was so very small, considering that the population was so great and the exports so large. Having presented my letters of introduction to the chief corn merchants, and made some heavy purchases, I retraced the road to Clonmel to see if all I had bought there had been dispatched.

But what was my surprise to find on my return that more than half of the lots of grain and flour that I had bought were still in the stores. Upon asking the reason why, I was told that the men employed on board the boats would not go down the river more than two days in a week ! I remarked that they ought to be discharged and others employed in their places ; to this the reply was that that plan had been tried, but the new men were threatened with violence, and thereupon withdrew, and the old hands were re-employed under the old plan. It seemed a pity to me that business should be hindered by such an arbitrary rule, but there was no help for it, and I was told that business was often crippled in various ways in Ireland, by the obstinacy of the working men.

However, I stayed until every lot was sent off, and during the delay found time to visit Moore's Free School.

The number of boys I found on the roll was only twenty-six, with a property (left by Richard and Stephen Moore) of 683 acres, the rental of which was £425 per annum, in addition to which £4,600 had been expended in buildings erected on land granted by John Bagwell. The annual value of the building was £139. The deed of bequest ordered that it should be "for a Free School for teaching and educating, gratis, children of Protestant Freemen of Clonmel." The Ormonde family and the Mayor of Clonmel had the sole power of appointing the

schoolmaster. The 683 acres had, by some mysterious process, dwindled down to 385 plantation acres; the master was paid £200 per annum, from the school revenue; and he was permitted to take boarders and demand fees, so that like most of our English endowed schools it was far from being a free school.

The day boys fees were £6 to £8 per annum, besides charges for modern languages. The head master had a large house with a good garden; and there was an extensive playground for the scholars. There were no boarders, although there was excellent boarding-house accommodation for such.

The second master expressed himself desirous for the abolition of the boarding-house, and throwing the school open to all comers, free of charge, especially as the freemen were diminishing every year.

The Irish endowed schools on the whole were in a wretched condition. Bad as the English were, they were much worse; some not in operation, except the operation of the revenues going into unemployed school-masters pockets; to educate no children being considered much more Christian, than to educate the children of Catholics. School properties lost, or improperly sold, and even where protestant children were to be found, only the sons of the rich admitted, the fees being put high on purpose to exclude the poor.

The trustees and masters plundered the school funds for their own private uses more or less throughout the 2,828 schools, 296 of which were closed; whilst on the other hand there were 91 towns of upwards of 2,000 inhabitants each without good schools.

I took the first packet from Waterford for Bristol. After going on board I was persuaded by a dealer in poultry to buy five young ducks, the price was two shillings and sixpence for the lot, and I thought I had a bargain; in this I was sadly disappointed, as two of them died on the passage, two others also died soon after I got home, and when the fifth was killed, he was about enough for one person's dinner; so I resolved, when I went to Ireland again, not to speculate in the duck trade.

My journeys at home were resumed, with the addition of

journeys to South Wales to purchase oats. Caermarthen, Haverfordwest, and Milford-Haven were the chief places of export. During one of these journeys I visited Narberth also, and bought largely from a person of the name of Rees. I sampled the oats and had a contract duly signed by each seller. Soon after this the markets began to rise, and Rees wrote to say that the oats had become warm in the warehouse, and consequently he should not ship them. I replied, saying that I held his written contract, and if he did not fulfil it he should hear from somebody else. This had the desired effect, and the oats came to hand.

Travelling at that time in South Wales was very expensive, the fare from Caermarthen to Haverfordwest on the outside of the mail in the middle of the night, was eleven shillings, the distance being only fourteen miles; to this must be added two shillings for the coachman and guard, which I declined to pay, telling those two worthies that their employer could well afford to pay them good wages out of the heavy fares.

My "Black Country" journeys were always done on horseback, thus—on Monday I started from Stroudwater, calling at Gloucester, and Tewkesbury, (at the latter place we worked the Abbey Mill) where I had to give instructions; then to Worcester, where I stayed the night. The next day was filled up amongst our customers at Worcester, from whence I rode to Stourport to call upon others there, and to Bewdley to stay the night. The third day to Kidderminster, Stourbridge, Wolverhampton, Bilston, Dudley, and after that to Birmingham. The next day being market-day at the latter town, I stopped until market was over, and rode in the evening to Worcester, calling on customers in Bromsgrove. On the Friday I reached Gloucester again, and stayed there for the market on Saturday. I record this journey to shew the young men of the present day, what was the amount of hard work done in my time, by all who kept horses. The present race of travellers may thank their stars for being born in railway times, with the exception of course of the risk of collisions.

I remained at Stroudwater until Midsummer, 1837, when I resolved to go to Bewdley, and begin business on my own account.



LOAD STREET AND ST. ANNE'S CHURCH, BEWDLEY.

I was moved to do this by having heard that my previous employers had given up their Bewdley branch to a brother who was carrying on the carpet trade there. I guessed that as he had no knowledge of the corn trade he would not be likely to succeed, and that, as I had a perfect knowledge of where and how to buy, and where and how to sell, I must succeed.

I had little or no capital, but at that period the Bristol merchants gave to trustworthy persons three months credit, and I felt that this would enable me to get returns of money in time to meet all demands. I began in a small way by taking a house and shop in Load-street, and for a store, an old malthouse on the "Severn side" which belonged to Mr. Thomas Cartwright, of the Red Hill House.

By degrees I attended Kidderminster, Stourbridge, and Worcester markets, to all of which I walked during the first three years, except in foul weather. My trade prospered, and I gave up some of my time to writing verses. In my journeys to Ireland and Wales, I had heard a good deal of traditionary lore, and having borrowed Nash's History of Worcestershire, I discovered that Bewdley was a very historical town, and had many traditions attached to it, and that the immediate neighbourhood also abounded in old traditions.

I therefore selected the subject of the Refugees in olden times to write upon, and incorporated with it the fact of a hermit having lived at Blackstone. Bewdley was one of the "Towns of Refuge," in past ages. At that time Saint Anne's Chapel stood at St. Anne's corner, near the end of the old bridge. The present chapel, which bears the same name as the old one, stands at the top of Load Street, and the first service was performed therein, on Lady Day, 1748.

When the present bridge was built by Telford in 1797 the old one was pulled down; upon the middle of the latter there was a wooden Gate-house, the north-end of which served as a dwelling house for the toll-gatherer, and the corporation used the other for a prison, which was called the Bridge House. Tolls were taken here, that for a millstone being as high as 7s. 6d.

In the Notes to "The Fortunes of Nigel," may be found a very full account of the enormities practised by some of the Refugees in their retreats; nothing seems to have been too villainous for their hands to do; in most cases, the old Refugees plundered the new comers, who in their turn, fleeced their successors; but some few held themselves aloof, and devoted their lives to good works.

The opportunity that desperate characters had of flying for refuge to the towns devoted for their reception, no doubt increased the crimes of the country, and the impunity with which they lived in such places, whilst it cast a stain upon the locality, brought at the same time great business thereto, as some members of high families, after committing offences, spent their fortunes in their home banishment, and many of them becoming altered characters, erected churches, and left bequests in favour of the poor of the place. Bewdley, being one of the towns of Refuge, benefited greatly in this way, and several chantry priests were appointed by its more opulent Refugees.

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### THE REFUGEE.

#### PART I.

Fair Clopton's meadows ne'er appeared  
 So brightly green and gay:  
 The feather'd tribes on every hand  
 Were singing on each spray:  
 The blue-clad sky was bright and clear,  
 The air serene and calm;  
 Sweet nature smil'd on all around,  
 O'er all diffused her balm.

Hark! swelling on the lazy air,  
 Doth peal on peal resound:  
 Fair Stratford's bells' unequalled tones,  
 All other sounds have drown'd;  
 For this the day—the happy day,  
 That Clopton's fairest maid  
 Has vow'd to wed her own true love,  
 The brave Sir Harry Wade.



Now, o'er the hills the bugles sound—

See on the distant plain

A bright array of horsemen comes,

In bold Sir Harry's train;

And in the front Sir Harry rides,

His eye with pleasure fraught;

His thoughts alone on Alice bent,

To him all else is nought.

Soon as the merry bugle notes

Had reached her eager ear,

She forth to meet him instant went,

Devoid of dread or fear:

Nor maid, nor vassal with her took,

For harmless as the dove,

She lived endearing every heart,

By charity and love.

With lightsome step and downcast eye

She onward silent sped,

The fond Sir Harry in her thoughts,

To all else she was dead:

With presages of future joy—

Of many happy years,

Of untired love's felicity,

She had nor doubts nor fears.

When as she passed the neighb'ring copse,

Rude footsteps came behind,

And o'er her temples cast a band

Of silk her eyes to bind;

Then on a horse, with violence,

Her lovely form was placed:

And soon with speed was hurried on,

By unknown arms embraced.

With screams she made the valleys ring,

With cries she rent the air:

Then sinking 'neath distress and grief,

Gave up to dark despair;

The well-known voice and horse's hoofs

Struck on Sir Harry's ear;

"Rescue," he cried, and soon he left

His followers in the rear.

On, on they dashed as quick as wind,  
O'er streamlet, vale, and hill :  
But still pursuit seem'd all in vain,  
The robber headed still ;  
On, on, they went, until they reached  
The sluggish stream of Rea ;  
Where Deritend's sweet village stood,  
In calm simplicity.

And here the fugitive delayed,  
To list if still pursued,  
And hearing horses sweeping near,  
Cast Alice in the flood :  
" There sink," he cried, " if I am not  
To be thy bridegroom blest,  
None else shall be," then on he sped,  
Like lightning towards the west.

As bold Sir Harry reached the bridge,  
He saw fair Alice sink,  
And with one desperate plunge he brought  
Her body to the brink :  
" Here, here," he cried, " now tend her well,  
Him well I will repay,  
Who can devise her life to save ;  
No longer I can stay.

" But I must on and have revenge,  
Upon the murd'rous slave :  
Nor e'er relinquish the pursuit,  
Until he's in his grave."  
Then on he sped through Edgbaston,  
Through Hagley Wood and Town ;  
Nor had he view of the pursued,  
Till they had reached Blakedown.

The sight his nerves and spirits raised,  
Revenge anew arose :  
And Kidderminster soon was passed  
By the all-breathless foes ;  
Near and more near Sir Harry gained,  
Hope now was rising fast,  
That he should soon o'ertake his foe,  
And be revenged at last.

In morn Sir Harry's mind was bright,  
 And free from clouded thought ;  
 But like the sky, life's changeable,  
 With light,—then darkness, fraught ;  
 And thus the sky all fair at dawn,  
 Became as one black cloud,—  
 And thunder, lightning, wind, and storm,  
 Bespoke the war aloud.

The elements in tumult strove,  
 With cannonade and blast :  
 And like Sir Harry and his foe,  
 Pursued each other fast.  
 The Town of Refuga was at hand,  
 The fugitive well knew,  
 And faster pressed his fainting steed,  
 As nearer it he drew.

Then challenged he the Bridge House watch,  
 And bribed his lazy sense,  
 And thus escaped a murderer's death,  
 A murderer's recompense.

\* \* \* \* \*

## PART II.

Where Blackstone's cliffs so proudly stand,  
 Begirt with smiling fields ;  
 And nature's ever teeming hand  
 Each year her plenty yields,  
 Erst nothing grew but thorns and weeds,  
 Nought but the sterile train  
 Of furze, lank thistles, useless reeds,  
 Earth's oldest curse and stain.

None sought the spot—none cared to seek,  
 Where all was wild and rude,  
 Nor e'er did human voices break  
 The weary solitude ;  
 Until a woe-o'erburden'd soul,  
 Who cared not where he strayed,  
 In mis'ry here sought out a goal,  
 And here his dwelling made.

With persevering toil he made,  
Within the rocky height,  
A cell wherein he daily prayed,  
And laid his head at night ;  
And soon his fame for virtue grew,  
Each case of grief he sought ;  
Each broken heart his goodness knew,  
Each erring soul he taught.

The young by soft persuasion's power  
From ruin's brink he charmed :  
The old in death's despairing hour,  
By prayer their fears disarmed ;  
Nor studied he man's vain pursuits,  
Nor sought he his own good :  
The wild born race of nature's fruits,  
His simple daily food.

His drink from Severn's stream he drew,  
Innoxious to the brain ;  
His bed the rushy tribe that grew,  
Upon the neighbouring plain ;  
Though poor he to the poor was kind,  
With food and nightly rest :  
And every weary wandering mind  
Was made a welcome guest.

But time, with thought and heavy care,  
Had turned his locks to grey ;  
And years to him brought no relief,  
To inward grief a prey.

One eve as musing o'er the past,  
On Blackstone's rocky height,  
A voice his startled ear addressed,  
For shelter through the night.

" A fugitive now asks your aid,  
Oppressed with heavy woe ;  
By guilty conscience ever weighed,  
No further can I go ;  
For yonder town this twice ten years  
Has been my constant jail,  
Unvaried subject of my fears,  
I durst not seek the vale.

"But fears now to the winds I've cast,  
To you I fly to tell  
The grievous sin of years long past,  
Which makes this earth a hell ;—  
When youth's tumultuous passions reigned,  
Within my ardent heart,  
I loved a maid, yet never deigned  
My passion to impart.

"She in the higher ranks was bred,  
I of a lower grade,  
Yet daily I my vain hopes fed  
That she for me was made,  
Till busy rumour spread abroad  
That she her plight had made,  
To have none other for her lord,  
But true Sir Harry Wade.

"With deep revenge my heart then beat  
And thoughts of blackest hate :  
I swore when they at church should meet  
To end their happy state.  
When on the morn the lovely maid  
Was to be giv'n away  
To bless the bold Sir Harry Wade—"  
"Stay," cried the Hermit, "stay.

"Here you behold Sir Harry Wade,  
Here now at last we meet ;  
I bless the hour you hither strayed,  
My vengeance now's complete ;  
Soon to their feet they eager sprang,  
And grasped each other tight,  
Whilst with their cries the valleys rang,  
Beneath the dizzy height.

Like warriors on the battle plain,  
More fierce their struggles grew,  
And grasped each other in fell strain,  
As near the edge they drew ;  
With panting breath and eager eyes,  
The Hermit pressed him sore ;  
And flung the Refugee head-long,  
Where Blackstone's eddies roar.

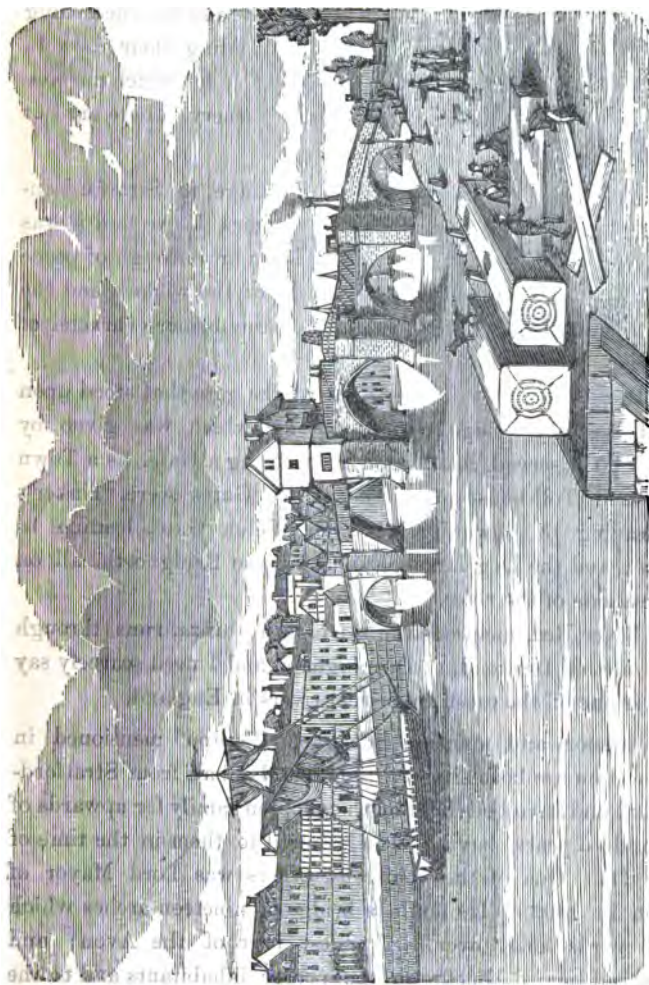
"There, sink, he cried, "nor ever rise,  
 To ask for mercy's hand,  
 In vain, for help, a murderer cries,  
 None near you now doth stand.  
 Since I have gained my end, my plan,  
 Once more I'll seek my home :  
 There live the rest of life's short span,  
 Nor ever wish to roam."

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Old Stratford's bells with muffled note,  
 Boomed slowly on the wind ;  
 A funeral train wound up the road,  
 And mourners came behind ;  
 They op'd fair Alice Clopton's tomb,  
 And by her side they laid  
 The heart that mourned her fatal doom,  
 The brave Sir Harry Wade.

Nor eulogy nor name was traced  
 Upon that tomb, though gilt :  
 Nought, nought but sorrow's form was placed,  
 And sword deprived of hilt ;  
 And here the lovers lie enshrined.  
 Whilst in his watery bed,  
 Her murderer sleeps on sands reclined,  
 Forgotten with the dead.

At Blackstone, just one mile from Bewdley, there are the remains of a Hermitage, cut in the solid rock, the one room being a library, the other a bed room, and the third a chapel ; it was very much as it was originally, when I visited it, except that instead of a library, the first room was occupied by a cider mill, the bed room by onions, and the chapel by worn-out farming tools ; the Hermits chimney is cut completely up through the rock, and through it the sky may be seen.

The situation of the Hermitage is delightful. In the front of the cell there is a seat carved in the rock, close on the border of the eastern side of the Severn, and having views of Winterdyne House and Rock, and Ribbesford Hall and Wood, and the Church on the opposite side of the river. The Hermitage must be of



BEWDLEY OLD BRIDGE (SOUTH).

"Then challenged he the Bridge-House watch,  
And bribed his lazy sense,  
And thus escaped a murderer's death,  
A murderer's recompense."

very ancient date, and some say that in modern times it was often made use of by the trow and bargemen who did a little in the smuggling line; be that as it may, many of the Barons, during the reign of the Conqueror, and of some of the succeeding monarchs, were fond of hewing out, and ending their days in such retreats as the Hermitage of Blackstone; for which purpose they generally chose some spot of superior scenery. There are but few more so than this.

Bewdley was the nearest Town of Refuge to Stratford-on-Avon, but in the Charter granted by James I. we find it was from thenceforth "to be and remain a Town or Borough of peace and quiet, to the terror and astonishment of the wicked, and the reward of the good." This is a proof of the former character of the place.

The Bridge House was the name of the gate that stood upon the old Bewdley bridge, (the stone for which was given by Henry VI.) it served, in addition to its being a Gate, as a Town Prison and Toll-house; the other three Gates were, Tinker's Gate, leading to Lower Arley; the Welch Gate, leading to Ludlow; and the Dog Lane Gate, leading to Bridgnorth, all on the west side of the river.

The River Rea, mentioned in the eighth stanza, runs through the Hamlet of Deritend, at Birmingham, and I need scarcely say that it is one of the most unpoetical rivers in England.

The manor and mansion house of Clopton mentioned in this tradition are both situated a mile and a half from Stratford-on-Avon, and have been held by the Clopton family for upwards of five hundred years, having been granted to them in the time of Henry III. One of the younger brothers was Lord Mayor of London in 1492. He built a bridge of nineteen arches which is 376 yards long, over the widest part of the Avon; and bequeathed many benefits to the poorer inhabitants and to the college.

The oldest monument to the family of the Cloptons, is an altar tomb, in the parish church of Stratford-on-Avon, raised  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet



from the floor, of carved free-stone, with panels for shields of arms, and covered with a marble slab, *without effigy or inscription*. On the north side is a similar tomb, with effigies, in white marble of a man in armour, and his consort with this inscription:—"Here lyeth the bodies of Wm. Clopton, Esq., and Anne, his wiffe, daughter of Sir George Griffith, Knight: which William deceased the 18th April, 1592, and the said Anne deceased the 17th September, 1596." The singularity of such a superior tomb being without an effigy or inscription is very remarkable, and so I have assumed that it was the tomb of the Hermit of Blackstone, Sir Harry Wade, after he returned to Stratford.

With regard to the Bewdley Grammar School I found it was shut up, "an Inquiry" having been instituted by the Attorney General as to its management, by which it found its way into the Court of Chancery.

The cause of this was that when the Charity Commissioners visited the school in 1833, they found that the head master, although he had ceased to teach, continued to draw his salary, and the usher, who also kept a private boarding school, was left to give elementary instruction to such boys as chose to come to him.

The accounts of the school revenue were in great disorder, being mixed up with those of the property belonging to the corporation, who had been appointed governors of the school by a charter of King James I., and several houses and pieces of land belonging to the charity had been lost.

There was neither master nor scholar—and the rents were accumulating in the Court of Chancery, the officials of which declared that the school could not be re-opened until a fit and proper school-house and master's residence were erected out of the fund.

The list of bequests to the school in bye-gone times is as follows:—

Gregory, John, and Thomas Ballard gave the land, in 1599, to build the school on.

William Monnox, tanner, gave a rent charge of £6 per annum, out of his estate at Church Stoke, in Montgomery (this is now called the Pentrenant Estate).

Humphrey Hill, in 1599, gave the rents of certain properties in and about Bewdley, which at this time let at about £73 12s. 6d. Some of these properties were let under improvident leases for 500 years.

Thomas Weaver left, in 1609, five shillings per annum, out of property facing St. Anne's Chapel, in Load-street.

John Millward left, in 1610, 13s. 4d. per annum, out of the Crundall's Farm, in the parish of Kidderminster.

Richard Clare left, in 1618, 5s. per annum, out of a tenement at Bark Hill.

Mr. Barber left, in 1619, forty shillings per annum.

John Clare left, in 1621, 3s. per annum, out of three small tenements on Sandy Bank.

Hugh Pooler left, in 1621, £20, the interest to be paid to the school uses; this produced 40 shillings per annum, out of the market tolls.

John Lowe left, before 1643, £10, which was laid out in the purchase of a close and tenement on Wyre Hill; in 1833 these premises were worth £20 per annum

Wm. Keye left 5s. per annum, in 1625, out of a burgage on Bark Hill.

John Tyler left 5s. per annum, out of a garden on Tinker's Hill.

Joan Tyler, his widow, left 20s., as a stock for ever.

John Wakeman left, in 1640, as a stock, 40s. The two last bequests have been lost.

The owner of a place called Gibraltar pays 6s. 8d. per annum (donor unknown).

Richard Vickaris left, in 1661, £5 per annum, to the head-master; and Thos. Cook, in 1693, left £6 per annum to the school.

The Rev. Thomas Wigan, of Bewdley, by will, proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 12th February, 1819, gave to the Rector of Ribbesford, and to the *Master of the Free Grammar School at Bewdley*, respectively, for the time being, and their successors for ever, all the books which, at the time of his death, he might be possessed of at Bewdley, in trust, for the use of the clergy and other respectable inhabitants of that town and neighbourhood, as a public library; and to that end, he directed that the same should be and remain deposited with the Master of the School, at the School House, who, together with the Rector for the time being, was to have the care thereof, and the direction for lending them out for reading when required, and of seeing them returned in proper time; and that the two catalogues thereof

should be signed, one by the rector, and the other by the school-master, and exchanged, and in like manner by succeeding rectors and schoolmasters; and the said testator requested the rector for the time being, once a year, or oftener, if he should think proper, to examine the books with the catalogue, and see that they were properly taken care of, or to depute some proper person to do so.

The books were delivered by the testator, long before his decease, to the rector of the parish, and the master of the grammar school, and their possession was confirmed by a decree of the Vice-Chancellor, in a suit for the administration of the testator's estate. Part of these books were in the school-room at the grammar school locked up in several presses. There were two catalogues signed by the testator, and about 2,000 volumes, containing a very good collection of classics, and of modern and ancient divinity.

The existence of the library was well known in the town, but there were few applications for the use of the books.

The following are the whole of the particulars of the foundation revenues and benefactions conferred upon the free school, as recorded by the parliamentary Commissioners in 1833 :—

King James the First, by letters patent, bearing date the 12th September 1606, confirming former charters granted to the corporation of Bewdley, for the better education of the boys and youths within the borough of Bewdley, and the liberties and precincts thereof, and that they might be *constantly educated* and instructed in good arts, virtue and learning, granted and ordained that for ever thereafter there should be within the borough a grammar school, to be called, "The Free Grammar School of King James in Bewdley," to consist of a master, and under-master or usher, and scholars, to be taught as thereafter specified, and that the bailiff and burgesses of the borough should be governors of the goods and revenues of the school, and they were thereby incorporated by that name, with a common seal, and empowered to take lands, &c., for the maintenance of the school as a corporation, with the other usual powers. And

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he gave the governors power, from time to time, to appoint an honest man, well learned and fearing God, to be master of the free grammar school, and another discreet and fit man to be under-master, to continue in the said offices during the pleasure of the governors and their successors, with power, on the death or removal of a master or usher, to appoint others in their places, to continue during pleasure. And the governors had power given them to make statutes and ordinances concerning the nomination, election, governing, punishing, expelling or removing the master, usher, and scholars, and concerning the property belonging to the school; and a licence was given to the governors to take lands, &c., not exceeding £20 a year, for the maintenance of the school, so that the same were not held *in capite* only, or by knight's service.



## CHAPTER VI.

They lay aside their private cares,  
To mend the Kirk and State affairs ;  
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,  
Wi' kindling fury in their breasts ;  
Or tell what new taxation's comin'  
An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.

BURNS.

TRADE was very bad at Bewdley in the year 1837, but public matters were very lively. The proclamation of the Queen and her coronation were the cause of great festivities. The proclamation took place on the 23rd of June, at two o'clock, three days after the King's death. The corporation and town clerk, and the gentry and tradesmen joined in procession on the occasion, accompanied by a band of music and a large flag, both of which were execrable. The first election of Sir Thomas Edward Winnington, in whose favour his father, Sir Thomas Winnington retired, occurred in this year, and made some little stir; and the rejection of the "Severn Improvement Bill" created another sensation.

It seems that the improvement of the "Navigation of the Severn" was an old project, as Mr. William Jessop, an eminent engineer, had proposed it in 1784. The gentle fall of the river was in favour of his proposal, which was to convert it into a ship canal so far as Stourport by means of weirs, the chief objection to which was that in cases of floods the water would be dammed up more than heretofore, and thus cause damage to the crops of grass in the meadows bordering on the river, and the opposition was so strong that the project was abandoned. In

1835 Mr. Edward Leader Williams, an ironmonger in Worcester, took it in hand, and by the exertions of a committee of citizens, a bill was brought into the House of Commons in 1837. It was opposed strenuously by Captain Berkeley, one of the members for the city of Gloucester, and rejected by a majority of only 25.

This result was hailed with great acclamations at Bewdley—the feasting and drinking were enormous, and the crowing over the Worcester men on account of their defeat was universal in this ancient borough. The tow and barge owners, the publicans, and even the bargemen themselves, whose labours would have been much lightened by the proposed improvement, were almost frantic with joy, but they little thought of the birth of a much more powerful opponent to the trade on the river, which took place in the very same month that the “Severn Improvement Bill,” was rejected. This opponent was the Birmingham and Manchester Railway, the precursor of other lines which have since caused the Severn, particularly above Worcester, to become almost a stream of ornamental water.

Finding my business increase I resolved to go to Ludlow market every Monday, on the mail coach, which arrived at the Wheat Sheaf Inn, Load Street, about six o’clock in the morning, on its journey from Birmingham.

This name of “Load Street” was given to the main street, because when the thrashed loads of corn were brought in on market days, they were unloaded or pitched on to the footpaths; and out of every load one bowl full of corn was taken by the corporation constable, as a toll belonging to them as of right and custom.

The journey to Ludlow was the pleasantest I ever travelled. The road through the “Far Forest,” as it was called (but properly Wyre Forest, a property belonging to the crown) and thence all the way to Cleobury Mortimer, was up and down very steep hills. The mansion of Sir Edward Blount, whose ancestors it is stated built Kidderminster Parish Church, in the chancel of which are some very gorgeous tombs of this family, was a splendid sight, standing proudly as you approach Cleobury on very

elevated ground, and surrounded with fine timber. The town of Cleobury is one of the old fashioned stamp—a market hall, a free school, two good inns, and a church, being the leading objects. The church unfortunately had a wooden steeple, and was sneered at in a distich which I believe was as untrue as it was inelegant—

“ A dirty town, a drunken people,

An ugly church, with a wooden steeple.”

The coachman pulled up at the Talbot Inn, and as the horses were being changed, the main street (which in fact is the only one) was all alive; the shopkeepers came out to have a stare, the boys and ne'er-do-weels stood gaping at the passengers, and as the coach moved away sundry remarks were loudly proclaimed, not very complimentary to our ears. Away we went up the street, the horses seeming to care very little for the load they drew. In reaching the open road they increased their pace, and we rattled down Hopton Bank, and through the stream which crossed the road (there was no bridge then) and up the opposite bank. Away we flew, rising higher and higher for a mile, where there was a good flat of some three hundred yards, then another rise and then another flat, and so on until we reached the top some six miles from Cleobury. Here was a sight worth travelling a hundred miles to see. We were on the top of the Clee Hill, 1200 feet above the valley and on a fine summer's morning the view from it was very imposing. With the aid of a hand telescope, the whole of the country as far as Bristol was visible on the left, whilst the valley of the Corve on the right, and the hills of Radnorshire in front, made up an enchanting scene.

When I was a boy in Birmingham I used to think that a stage-coachman was the finest fellow in the world; his long whip, many-collared coat, huge hat, top-boots, his four splendid horses, and the clean well painted coach under his command, to say nothing of his riding every day free of cost, made him appear to my mind a far superior person to any other mortal living; but I never thought about such glorious scenes as we witnessed between Bewdley and Ludlow, and the glass of home-brewed at the road side inn, and as in the case of the mail coaches the aristo-

cratic driving through the turnpikes without paying tolls; these were things unknown to the experience of my boyish days, but often and often enjoyed and highly appreciated in after life.

Where the coachman breakfasted I breakfasted; a coachman always knew the "best shop" for eating and drinking, and so we regularly adjourned to the Rose and Crown, kept at that time by Mr. Amyes. Everything was beautifully clean, and the coffee and fish and toast of first class quality. The appetite, too, was all right, and as our arrival was very punctual, everything was ready for us. I believe there is nothing much more to be desired or more agreeable on this earth than a good breakfast at an inn, and a good appetite; no wonder that Shenstone wrote those lines of his on the pane of glass in the window of the Swan Inn at Henley-in-Arden.

Who e'er has travelled life's dull round,  
Where'er his stages may have been,  
May sigh to think he still has found  
The warmest welcome at an inn.

He was quite right; we found no family impediments, no half-awake servant at the Rose and Crown at Ludlow; the coachman and I were waited upon like lords, and at the same time were charged very moderately. In the season, too, the landlord always took care to give us a dish of fresh trout, just caught; fancy that! just caught in the river Teme—oh! that I could go that old journey again!

The market not being held until post meridiem, I had plenty of time on my hands; I soon established a trade with a few bakers and corn dealers, and, after calling upon them, I wandered forth into the country.

I took different routes on each succeeding Monday, and on the first started off to Oakley Park, which was two miles north-west of the town. This was and is the seat of the Clive family; the park on the eastern side was laid out with elegant plantations, which, with the fine old oaks abundantly planted in the grounds, and the meandering river Teme, near the hall, afforded a combination of objects delightful to the eye. Not only so but in the



distance there was a long stretch of luxuriant woods and plantations, mixed up with rich and fertile valleys, and bounded by a variety of bold and grand eminences, which made a deep and lasting impression on the mind.

After satiating my sight I wandered on over a bridge, which crossed the river Teme, near which was a mill and cascade, and soon reached the village of Bromfield. At a long distant date a priory of Benedictine Monks was established here. Leland says of it that it was a priory of Monks belonging to Gloucester, to whom it was given by one of the Giffards. It stood between the Teme and the Oney, and proved that the Monks were not only men of learning, but men of taste as to locality.

My most favourite walk was to Downton Castle, the residence of a writer of no mean powers, Richard Payne Knight. It cost no less than £60,000 in the erection, and was built with singular irregularity, with towers and embattled walls, combining the military architecture of the Greeks and Romans, yet the interior was unsurpassed for comfort and elegance, added to which there were numerous pleasant views from the windows; the lawn was bounded by the river Teme, and the elevated ground on which the mansion stood was surrounded by an extensive amphitheatre of wood; the scenery around agreed in its variety with the castellated mansion, and was well described by the owner in his poem of "the Landscape":—

" So let th' approach and entrance to your place  
Display no glitter, and effect no grace;  
But still in careless easy curves proceed,  
Through the rough thicket, or the flow'ry mead;  
Till bursting from some deep embower'd shade,  
Some narrow valley, or some op'ning glade,  
Well mix'd and blended in the scene, you shew  
The stately mansion rising to the view:  
But mix'd and blended ever let it be,  
A mere component part of what you see.  
Component parts in all the eye requires;  
One formal mass for ever palls and tires."

And in his poem of the "Progress of Society" he expressed himself as follows :—

" Here on thy shady banks, pellucid Teme,  
May heaven bestow its last poetic dream ;  
Here may these oaks in life's last glimmer shed  
Their sober shadows o'er my drooping head,  
And those fair Dryads whom I sang to save,  
Reward their poet with a peaceful grave."

I need not detail the different routes I took during the few hours I had at my command on each succeeding Monday ; they would fill many pages, but I did not forget to ransack the remarkable places in and about the town, as well as to perambulate the country.

Ludlow was anciently called DINAN, LLYS, TWYSOG, *i.e.*, the city of the Princes Palace. There was a wall round it of a mile in circumference, and there were seven gates, of which some parts remained. Churchyard, the poet, who wrote during the reign of Elizabeth, thus apostrophized it :—

" The town doth stand most part upon an hill,  
Built well and fayre, with streets both large and wide,  
The houses such where strangers lodge at will,  
As long as there the Council lists abide.  
Both fine and clean the streets are all throughout,  
With conduits cleere and wholesome water springs ;  
And who that lists to walke the town about,  
Shall find therein some rare and pleasant things ;  
But chiefly there the aire so sweet you have,  
As in no place you can no better crave."

The church was built in 1272, by Lawrence de Ludlow, and was named after St. Lawrence. Many eminent persons are buried here, amongst whom is Sir Henry Sydney, and his wife, who was a daughter of the famous John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, who was beheaded in 1553. Sir Henry was Lord President of the Council of Wales from about 1556 to 1584.

I visited the Castle and its Walk many times ; the Countess of Powis took great pride in making the road perfect ; all round the Castle Walk were fine beeches, those on the west side being embowered, from which were seen the river, bounded by the bold hill of Whitecliffe, and its extensive coppice.

Mr. Warton, in a prefatory note to the *Masque of Comus*, says the Castle was built in 1112. The best historians say it was built by Roger de Montgomery, immediately after the Conquest. He was created Earl of Shrewsbury, and enjoyed nearly the whole county of Salop.

Soon after King John's reign the Irish family of the "Lessois," or Lacey's held it by descent from the Albanis'. The Lessois granted large possessions in and near Ludlow, for the support of the religious house of St. John the Baptist, which stood near the bridge at Ludlow. It is stated that a church once stood without the broad gate, named after St. John the Evangelist, erected from a belief in a tradition that he had given a ring to some pilgrims from Ludlow to take home.

But what were all these events in comparison with the facts of Milton's *Comus* being first performed here in 1634, and published in 1637, just two centuries ago; and of Butler's *Hudibras* being penned here whilst he was secretary to Richard, Earl of Carbury, President of Wales. *Hudibras*, it appears, was not all written at once, as it appeared in parts from 1663 to 1677.

Over the entrance into the interior of the edifice by the southwest door I found some remains of the arms of the Sydney family, with the following inscription underneath:—

HOMINIBVS INGRATIS LOQVIMINI  
LAPIDES,—ANNO REGNI REGINÆ  
ELIZABETHÆ 23 THE 28 YEAR  
COPLETO OF THE PRESIDENCY  
OF SIR HENRIE SYDNEY KNIGHT  
OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE  
GARTER, ETC. 1581.

During the Presidency of Sir Henry Sidney, Ludlow Castle seems to have been his favourite residence. He repaired and adorned it, and caused many salutary regulations and orders to be made in the court, as appears in an ancient folio volume in *MS.* preserved out of the plunder of the castle, then in possession of Mr. Felton, a printer at Ludlow, containing principally entries of the proceedings of the president and council during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, and Charles I. and II.

One of Sir Henry's daughters was married to Henry Earl of Pembroke. It was in praise of this lady that Ben Jonson wrote this admirable epitaph :—

Underneath this sable hearse  
Lies the subject of all verse,  
Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother ;  
Death ! ere thou hast slain another,  
Learn'd and fair, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Sir Henry Sydney died in 1584 during the enjoyment of his presidency, his mind seems to have been wholly bent on a faithful discharge of the duties of his office, which he appears to have executed with inflexible integrity. Historians say that previous to his death he had ordered his heart to be buried at Shrewsbury, his bowels at Bewdley, where he died, and his body at Ludlow in the tomb of his daughter Ambrosia, to whose memory there is an inscription placed in the high chancel of Ludlow church.

The directions as to interment of bowels, heart, and body, in different places were common enough, even at this period, and more so at an earlier one. Even so late as George II. (1760) there was a separate interment (in the same vault certainly) of the bowels of the monarch, of which an account is given in the "Annual Register" for the year.

In the history and antiquities of Shrewsbury, published in 1779, is given a very curious account of Sir Henry Sydney's visit to that place from his castle of Ludlow, an extract from which, as it very accurately delineates the manners of the age, and has been much admired for its elegant simplicity, I shall here present to the reader in its native style and orthography. After describing his lordship's reception, and the manner in which he was entertained by the different companies of the town, on Saint George's Feast Day, the account proceeds :—

"And the daye followinge all the scollers of the free scoole, being taughte by the four masters, beinge in number 360, with their master before every of them, marchyng bravely from the sayd scoole in battell order, with

generalls, captens, drumms, trumpetts, and ensigns before them, through the town towards a large filde called the *Geye* in the abbey subburbs of Salop, and there devydinge theire banndes into four partes, met the sayde Lord President, beinge upon a lusty courser, who turned him about and came to them, the generall openinge to his lordshyp the purpose and assembly of hym and the rest, then he wyth the other captens made theire orations, howe valiantly they would feight and defend theire country, at whych the sayde lord had greate pleasure, and mutch rejoiced, givinge greate prayse to the sayde masters for the eloquence thereof; and on the 13th daye of Maye the sayde Sir Henry Sidney departed from Shrewsbury by water, and took hys barge under the Cassell Hyll by hys place, and as he passed by there fourteen chamber pieces bravely shott off with a certain shott of harquebushers, and so passing on not the length of a quarter of a myle of by water, theire were placed in an ilet hard by the water syde, serten appointed scollers of the free scoole, apparelyd all in greene and greene willows on theire heads, marchyng by and calling to hym macking theire lamentable orations sorrowinge his departure, the whitch was done so pitifullye and of sutch excellency that truly it made many, bothe in the barge uppon the water, as also the people uppon the lande to weepe, and my lord hymself to change countenance."

One boy alone thus addressed him,—

Oh stay the barge, rowe not soe fast,  
 Rowe not soe fast, oh stay awhile;  
 Oh stay and heare the playnts at last,  
 Of nymphs that harbour in thys isle.

Thear woe is greate, greate moan they make,  
 With doleful tunes they do lament;  
 They howle, they cry, theire leave to tacke,  
 Theire garments greene for woe they rent.

O SEAVERN, turn thy stream quite backe,  
 Alas! why doyst thou us annoye?  
 Wilt thou cause us this lord to lacke,  
 Whose presence is our only joye.

But harke, methinks I heare a sounde,  
 A wofull sound I playnly heare;  
 Some sorrow greate theire heart doth wounde  
 Pass on my lord, to draw them neare.

After a few lamentations in the same plaintive strain, his lordship was dismissed with the following chorus:—

And will your honor now depart,  
And must it needs be soe;  
Would God we could lyke fishes swyme,  
That we might wythe thee goe.

Or else would God this littill isle,  
Were stretched out soe large:  
That we on foot might follow thee,  
And wayt upon thy barge.

But seeing that we cannot swyme,  
And island's at an end,  
Saffe passage with a short return,  
The mighty God thee send.

His lordship was so highly delighted, either with the reception he met with from the corporation, or with the graceful effusions of the youthful poet, that he repeated his visit the year following, accompanied by his lady in her waggon.

The charity called the Palmers' Guild of the Blessed Virgin at Ludlow, was incorporated in A.D. 1284, and its school is mentioned in records dating back as far as the 14th century, in a way leading to the belief that it existed when the guild itself was incorporated.

In the fifteenth century the corporation of Ludlow, which was then the residence of the governor of the Welsh marches, received by the grant of King Edward IV. another estate of considerable value. At the Reformation, the Palmers' Guild was obliged, before its dissolution, to surrender its whole property into the hands of King Edward VI. By him this property was regranted to the bailiffs and corporation of Ludlow, charged with the performance of the duties which the Palmers' Guild had discharged. These duties were, the maintenance of a free grammar school, of a preacher, of an assistant to the rector, and of certain almshouses. After the wont of corporations, the corporation of Ludlow mixed up the revenue of these estates with that of their estate bestowed by King Edward IV., and

managed them conjointly, paying (in 1820) a sum of £165 to the school, and £367 to the other charitable purposes which had been committed to them.

The school buildings were in one of the main streets of Ludlow, those wide, handsome, empty streets that tell of a greatness that has passed away and is not likely to return. The school-room was old and somewhat gloomy. The forms and desks were old and clumsy. The playground, which lies close to the school, was certainly too small. The head master had a good house, opening both to the school and to the street, with accommodation in it for a dozen boarders at least.

Internally the grammar school consisted of an upper and a lower school, the former of which was supposed to belong especially to the head master, the latter to the usher. The principal studies of the upper school were the classics, mathematics, and arithmetic; of the lower school Latin begun when boys entered; Greek begun in the second form; and the English subjects, grammar, geography, history, spelling, arithmetic, book-keeping and outline drawing were taught to some little extent; French and German not at all.

Fifty years before this Ludlow was a local metropolis, perhaps the greatest town between Shrewsbury and the Bristol Channel, and many of the local gentry had houses there, in which they lived during part at least of the year.

There is a small endowment (shared by Ludlow with the cathedral school at Hereford), which provided an annual payment, originally of £2 13s. 4d., but then of £5 6s. 8d. to each of four scholars "poor and towardlie for learning, born in the town of Ludlow." These four boys, who were called "Langfordians" from Dr. Langford, Dean of Hereford, the author of the endowment, were chosen by the trustees.

The Corn Market was held in the ancient building with open sides, the room above being used for corporation meetings and balls. The class of farmers assembling here were of a better sort than most, particularly those from Corve-Dale—proving that the better the land the better the farmer. We used

to dine at the Elephant and Castle, kept by host Matthew Evans, and such a fine healthy set of tenants of the soil were seldom to be met with as at that table; of course even they grumbled a bit at something or other—either prices were too low, although the harvest was abundant, or the yield was too short, although the price was high. Somehow or other a good yield and a good price never could be realized out of one and the same harvest.

Our return journeys were as pleasant as those of the morning up to Ludlow; the view on a bright evening from the top of the Clew Hill was transcendent; the going down of the sun, which grew broader and broader as he descended on the verge of day; the shifting clouds, rich with a manifold variety of hues as they gathered round his throne; the unbounded landscapes scattered over thirteen counties; the rich valleys burthened far and wide with innumerable hills, and graced with immense woods and forests, composed a panorama not easily to be described with a feeble pen.

As we came back to Cleobury we passed Hopton-Wafers, reviving the memory of William Henry West Betty, the "Young Roscius." His father and mother resided there from 1791 up to 1803, when they removed near to Belfast. A theatrical gentleman, being on a visit to his father, the latter told him of the fondness of the boy for plays; he heard him with amazement recite speeches from Pizarro, and advised the father to let him see the plays wherein Romeo and Young Norval were portrayed.

The friend on his return to Belfast told the manager that he had found a diamond in a rough quarry, and the consequence was that at eleven years of age Young Betty appeared before a Belfast audience in "Zara," with the greatest success. After this he took the round of the chief theatres in Ireland and Scotland, and appeared for the first time in England in August, 1804, at Birmingham, increasing the weekly receipts there from £300 to £1000. But he did not forget poor out-of-the-way Hopton-Wafers, which he visited before going to London, where he met with unbounded success.

Between Hopton and Ludlow we met a post-chaise, and on



my saying to the coachman that I thought I knew the postilion's face; he told me he was the landlord of the Talbot Inn at Cleobury, where we changed horses, and that he filled up his time in taking families from place to place. I never knew such a case before nor since, but I was so pleased, that many and many a time we had some chat and glasses of stout together on account of his wise conjunction of humility and industry.

Of course the *Quidnuncs* of Bewdley discussed all local matters with great zest, all county matters with great seriousness, and all imperial matters with great heat; that which they knew least about excited them the most, and unfortunately created the most animosity amongst them.

It had been the rule from nobody knew what date for the magisterial bench to be occupied by "Church and King men," how could it be otherwise, seeing that the member for the borough (up to the passing of the Reform Act) had always been such, the corporation had always been such, and as a matter of course the bench of magistrates followed suite. ✓

The whole of these arrangements were so snug and so apparently secure, that the member who sat for the borough from 1818, up to the time of the passing of the Reform Bill, never dreamt of being eclipsed, the borough having been a close one time out of mind.

The Municipal Act, passed in 1835, had not altered the power of the old party much, so far as the corporation (now styled the town council) went, nor so far as the magisterial bench was concerned, so that when Lord John Russell, in Feb., 1838, had the effrontery to nominate a Whig gentleman as a magistrate, the town was shocked as if by an earthquake. This, exclaimed the whole party, was the first fruits of the Reform Act! What would become of the country if things went on in this way? Conclaves were held, violent speeches made, remonstrances and a declaration of war against Mr. Williams's nomination duly proposed and sanctioned, but cool Lord John Russell took no notice thereof, and the end of it was that the Whig partizans fêted the new magistrate at the George Inn.

The Whig party of the county had established the *Worcestershire Chronicle* in January of the same year, by means of a joint stock company, in order to publish their opinions and strengthen their position, and the Bewdley Whig victory in the person of the new magistrate was very prominently and ably handled therein.

On the long summer evenings I used sometimes to put my flute in my pocket and go for a ramble; my favourite route was past Tickenhill, through the Park to the Golden Valley, and then, taking a sharp turn to the right, and going through a field, I arrived at a spot called Cannon Hall. At this point there was a stream, over which a miniature wooden bridge was built, where, sitting down, I used to play some of my favourite tunes. The stream was very small and rapid; at every few feet there was an eddy, in which stray leaves and bits of branches were whirled to and fro, with as great violence comparatively as the timbers and spars of a wrecked ship are in a storm; and sportive giddy flies of all shapes and colours, struggled with the stream, and often met with a watery grave. Just so thought I are the lives of many comparatively; the higher a man gets the greater the wreck he suffers if he meets with an overwhelming storm; and yet we often see the humble man, whose cares are few, fretting and stewing as much over the molehills in his path, as the great man does when he has to contend with a volcano of misfortune. Thomson was right when he exclaimed—

“I care not, Fortune! what you me deny!  
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace  
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,  
Through which Aurora shews her brightening face;  
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace  
The woods and lawns by living stream at eve;  
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,  
And I their toys to the great children leave,  
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

This walk being so near Tickenhill House (anciently called Ticken-hill or Goat's-hill), often brought Queen Katharine and her marriage with Prince Arthur into my mind. On my return

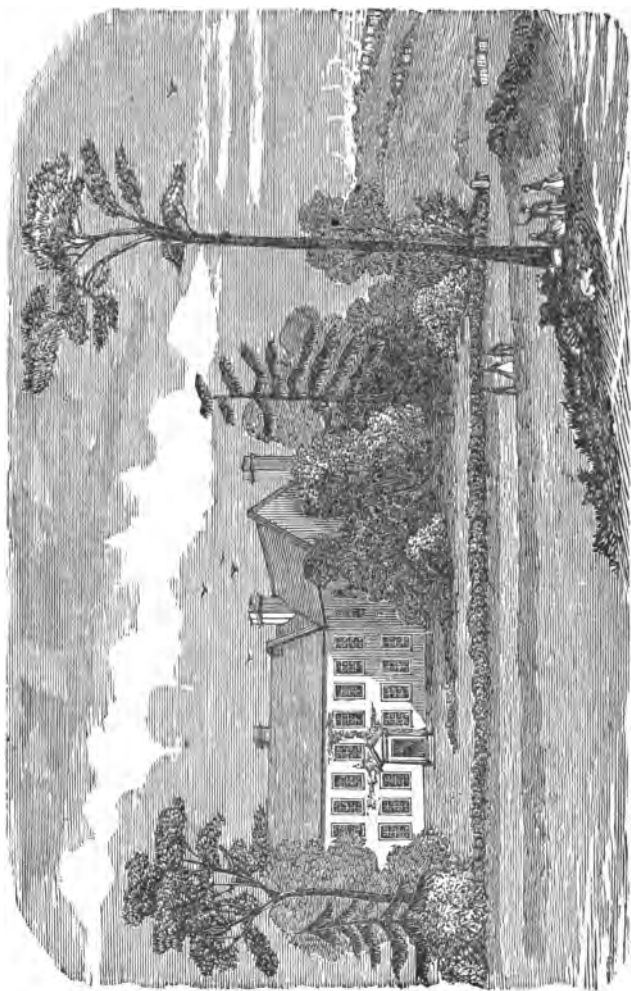
home one evening, I sat down and wrote in commemoration of my oft-repeated visits to Cannon Hall, the following verses :—

'Tis sweet to stroll round Tickenhill's fair fields  
And think of days when Katharine wept unseen  
Within its walls ; and quick the bosom yields  
To grief, felt but by few on earth I ween,  
The grief of death, blighting life's brightest scene ;  
Relentless death ! how oft he takes the flower,  
How oft he blights the fruit yet scarcely green,  
Leaving rank weeds to grow in ev'ry bower,  
But crushing brightest buds with his malignant power

Methinks in settled melancholy mood,  
She wandered through sweet Ribbesford's avenues,  
And in the moaning winds found mystic food  
To feed her sighs upon : whilst the dark hues  
Of blighted hope crept o'er her once bright views.—  
How sweet is silence to the wounded mind !  
How deeply our own loneliness imbues  
All things around us when with grief entwined,  
Then giving sigh for sigh appears to be most kind.

Yes, doubtless, she oft stole away alone,  
Along thy hedge-girt paths, sweet Tickenhill !  
And thought she heard that voice once so well known,  
Speak in the whisp'ring winds and purling rill,  
And fondly stopped, her eager ears to fill.  
In vain the past her wand'ring thoughts decoyed.  
For weary solitude clung round her still,  
As with the sightless, all was one dark void,—  
Her young soul's light was gone, her earliest hope destroyed !

Ah ! what can heal the wound that death inflicts  
On hearts by love conjoin'd in youthful days ?  
Ah ! who can tell the spot where balm exists,  
Whose pow'rful agency such grief allays ?  
Say, can the glorious sun's all-searching rays,  
Dispel the gloom that settles on that mind,  
Or Lethe-like, where is the stream that plays,  
Wherein oblivion from such pangs we find,  
And henceforth haply be to fond remembrance blind ?



**TICKENHILL HOUSE, BEWDLEY.**

"Tis sweet to stroll round Tickenhill's fair fields  
And think of days when Katharine wept unseen

Within its walls ; and quick the bosom yields  
To grief, felt but by few on earth I ween."

Oh, grief supreme ! to leave the lovely form  
On which we doated, in the silent tomb,  
A helpless prey to the remorseless worm,—  
A beauteous wreck to sink in death's dark gloom,—  
A youthful victim to man's certain doom!  
Say, shall the morning sun no more arise ?  
Shall spring for ever lose her cheerful bloom ?  
No ! 'fore the winds of truth dejection flies,  
The soul for ever lives, although the body dies.

Consoling thought ! how dark would be the night  
Of death, if no bright morn upon it broke ;  
How would the human mind shrink with affright,  
If, after that, the soul no more awoke,  
And, like the body, sank beneath death's stroke.  
Yet though this life with brightest joys be drest,  
And health and wealth the love of life provoke,  
Still we all yearn to sojourn with the blest,  
Where sin doth cease to sting and weary souls find rest.

Cease, cease ye murmurers at life's short space,  
No more compare it to a cloud,—a spark,  
That gleams but for a moment,—a short race—  
Or constant tempest, beating 'gainst your bark ;  
'Tis but your coward fears that make it dark :  
This life is long enough ; on let us haste,  
And seek to enter that protecting Ark  
Which rides triumphant over time's wide sea,  
And brings us to the land of pure felicity.

Thus hope oft soothes full many a weary breast,  
And Kath'rine felt resigned as thus she thought,  
And like the mourning bird, robb'd of its nest,  
One sweet sequester'd spot she always sought,  
To ease those pangs with which her breast was fraught ;  
There on that bridge, that spans the mimic stream  
At Cannon Hall, her wand'ring steps she taught  
To reach, when evening's " milder, calmer beam "  
Had lull'd the noisy world into a slumb'ring dream.

That stream had like a household god become,  
Its every turn was stamp'd indelibly  
Upon her mind's eye, and its rushing hum,  
Fell on her ear like to the distant sea.

As down its bed it dash'd impetuously ;  
The water-flies upon its surface flew  
In giddy haste, heedless with ecstasy,  
And seemed delighted as if all were new,  
And still unsated sped each inlet to review.  
Sweet woods in miniature crept up its sides,  
And wild-born flowers peep'd out like gems between,  
And sunken holes remained, as if the tides  
Of ocean had broke o'er its fairy scene.  
There stunted rocks look'd down with angry mien,  
And the bees buzz'd around on heavy wing,  
Whilst Philomel, of evening birds the queen,  
Made ev'ry nook around with music ring,  
And charm'd th' astonish'd ear when others ceased to sing!  
Hail, fav'rite spot ! cursed be the hand that dares  
To alter one iota of thy grace,  
May all his after-life be full of cares,—  
May all his issue die beneath disgrace,  
And none be left to know his dwelling place ;  
Oh, spare this spot ; hold, hold thy vandal hand,  
Lend not thine aid to alter its sweet face ;  
Pillage—dismantle—all thy native land.  
But let sweet Cannon Hall with all its beauties stand.  
For here the morn in majesty descends,  
And scatters dews upon the op'ning flowers,—  
Here charming eve its soothing influence lends,  
And night distills unseen its genial showers,  
Which eagerly the sun-burnt earth devours ;  
Here spring presides and summer reigns serene,  
And autumn decks with golden fruit the bowers ;  
Here winter wears its least terrific mien,  
And nature clothes with smiles the ever pleasing scene.  
Here rustics love to sing their home-spun lays  
To blushing maids along the silent lane ;  
Here aged eyes look back upon those days  
When life to them seem'd void of care or pain,  
And hope on his bright wings had not one stain :  
Here Flora dwells amidst her fav'rite bowers,—  
Here, too, Apollo pipes his sweetest strain,—  
And Love, attended by the laughing Hours,  
Dreams not that time and care can blast the brightest flowers.

## CHAPTER VII.

The rude and barbarous seek to live apart,  
In them is found no taste or love for art,  
They shun the laws of town-life and its ways,  
And, savage born, remain so all their days.  
Their bodies their sole care, their souls untilled,  
Like to the Forest soil become self-willed,  
Breeding things rank and fruitless, thus they scorn  
The law of love, and die as they were born.

UNPUBLISHED POEM.

IN the year 1840 I had the misfortune to have my house set on fire by the carelessness of a servant girl; this caused me to remove soon after to the corner house at the bottom of Load Street. Immediately after doing so I was appointed one of the overseers in conjunction with two other tradesmen, Mr. Townsend, an ironmonger, and Mr. George Pitt, a basket-maker, our services being gratuitous and the duties very disagreeable.

The rule then was to levy a rate every four months, and by this means each overseer had to write one rate book, and take his turn in collecting one of the rates.

But this year an exception to this rule took place for the following reasons:—Mr. James Holder, one of the oldest inhabitants of the town, had discovered that the "Far Forest" belonged legally to the borough of Bewdley, and not to the county. Mr. Holder, I say, was one of the oldest inhabitants, and I believe he was the very oldest, as he told me that when he was nearly out of his apprenticeship he went to see George III., when he paid a visit to Bishop Hurd, at Hartlebury Castle, in 1788.

This discovery placed my two fellow-overseers and myself in a very unpleasant position, and I suppose we were appointed because we were not very likely to be frightened by the "Far Foresters," as the inhabitants of that lawless district, known as the "Far Forest" were called.

The condition and manners of most of these peculiar people were very primitive; they were besom makers by general report, but with many of them, poaching, sheep-stealing, and marauding in the neighbourhood, occupied a great portion of their time. Their stock-in-trade consisted of wood-cutting tools and besom trucks, whilst here and there a more respectable member owned a donkey. Education was quite unknown, and marriages and giving in marriage formed no part of their domestic economy. The coats, breeches, and vests of the grown-up sons were of many colours, and as to their hats the Irish "caubeens" were genteel in comparison. Some of the house or rather hut-holders had a pig, some had two, and from a neighbourly dread of exchange or misappropriation, these useful animals and the donkeys occupied the "butt ends" of the huts.

The ladies were not a whit behind their aspiring sons in their costume and language; to describe the former would only create disbelief in the reader's mind, as to the truthfulness of the writer, and as to the rich native qualities of their dialogues, the less said the better. The younger children of course fulfilled the time-worn remark, like father like son, like mother like daughter, and, with the exception of being visitors occasionally to the neighbouring towns with their trucks or donkey loads of besoms, they might as well have had an impassable wall built round their forest colony.

However, the three overseers had to do their duty, and at my desire my two companions-at-arms breakfasted with me at six o'clock on the day we resolved to make our first attack on the breeches-pockets of the Far Foresters.

We passed up the town and were soon on the turnpike road leading to Cleobury. About one-and-a-half or two miles brought us to a spot called the Pump, where we turned to the right, over a stile, and at once found ourselves in the far-famed Forest. This extensive tract of land belongs to the Crown; it formed part of the properties of the Marches of Wales in past ages, and in recent times had been leased to the Winnington family. They were indulgent landlords, and as it often happens in other phases of



life, their indulgence made their Far Forest tenants lazy instead of active. To us, therefore, as greedy overseers in search of money, our task seemed hopeless amongst a tenantry who paid rent, or left it unpaid, just as they themselves deemed proper.

And so it proved, for although we said again and again at each hut, in the language of Saint George, in the old Christmas revels—

Money we want, money we crave,  
And money we must have,

not a penny did we get. It seems that our approach had been watched for and signalled throughout the length and breadth of the hostile territory, as not one senior male did we see during the whole nine hours of our march. This absenteeism we learnt afterwards was adopted under the belief that unless we demanded the rates from the men personally, we could not recover them by law. However, we met with plenty of advice from the ladies, and inferred that they had been carefully instructed by their lords.

Under a resolution come to between ourselves we adopted the civil plan, hoping by that means to get the money; but this, as it does generally in the case of dealing with vixenish wives, produced the opposite results. We were told by some to go to a very distant region, by others to go to the Head of that distant region and shake ourselves, to which advice, we, being both tired and hungry, turned a deaf ear. We were threatened with a variety of tortures, too numerous to mention *in extenso*, and told that we had better have stopped at home to mind our own business (which we certainly should have been very glad to do), and that if we dared to come again we must be sure to bring our coffins with us, for we should never quit the Forest again in our shoes.

To make our discomfort worse we could get nothing to eat or drink; we offered in two or three cases to pay for rashers of bacon and a loaf, but were met with direct refusals; so, after leaving the notices at each hovel, some of which were thrown back at us indignantly, we found our way into the turnpike road, and being as ravenous as wolves, made straight for the public house called "Mopson's Cross."

Here we found several flitches of bacon hanging up (one of which I thought I should myself be able to curtail seriously, if not to eat the whole), and getting the servant girl to stand on a tall stool to cut off the rashers, we each in our turn snapped them from her, and, running to the fire, fork in hand, devoured them almost as fast as she could slice them off the flitch; whilst doing this the landlady, Mrs. Potter, supplied us with splendid home-made cider, in stone cups, and slices and pints, and pints and slices, disappeared down our throats with amazing rapidity, for at least an hour.

One of our number, Mr. Pitt, had been a teetotaler for some time, but we persuaded him that cider was not forbidden to man, although the fruit from which this beverage is extracted had been at a period the most ancient on record; and, sad to say, from the great fatigue he had undergone, and the great relish he found in the cider, long before we started to return home he was far from being in a state to deliver an oration on the delights of temperance.

The end of this Far Forest collecting was, that after offering various unattached persons in Bewdley, one after another, from five to ten pounds to collect the rate for us, without avail, we, having a due fear of the coffin advice, placed the matter in the proper law officers' hands, and summoned every one of the rebellious and absentee tenants.

This, from an unforeseen cause, ended better than we expected; every rate was paid, not in *propria personæ* by the tenants, but by some man-in-the-moon process, as there was an expectation afloat that at the ensuing election there would be an opposition to the sitting member, and that it would be essential for his future success that this "worthy and intelligent" body of tenants should be duly registered on the list of free and independent electors. We, the three overseers, therefore escaped the ordeals of the other two Far Forest rates, so far as tramping the Forest went, but Mr. Pitt, although a consistent person in most things, was never known to pass Mopson's Cross in after days without calling to taste the cider.

In the following spring I was intrusted, by my Birmingham employers, with samples of grain to sell to millers and wholesale dealers, on their account, on commission; this proved a good addition to my yearly profits.

This commission induced me to give up Worcester market, where I went only to purchase grain, and to substitute Bridgenorth market, at which I could sell wholesale, and buy spring grain for my own trade.

There being no conveyance from Bewdley to Bridgenorth I found it necessary to buy a horse, which, with a new bridle, saddle, spurs, &c., cost me some thirty pounds. Soon after this I bought a new narrow-wheel cart, and then considered myself set up for life.

Bridgenorth was a new field altogether; the farmers, millers, and dealers were all unknown to me, but as I was enabled to offer Foreign and Irish grain, and English beans, (which were not grown then in that district), I soon became known; to this was added the opportunity of buying oats and barley to sell on other markets.

This was my first journey on horseback on my own account, therefore I felt somewhat consequential. I took the nearest road for Bridgenorth up a lane near the Wribbenhall turnpike on the east side of the river, and then passed over Trimpley Green to Shatterford; the road thence to Bridgenorth was not very hilly until we passed the Squirrel Inn at Alveley; the scenery from thence was rich, and the mansions of Coton and Dudmaston, and the churches of Quatt and Quatford, to say nothing of the castle built by Mr. Smallman at the latter place, added greatly to the pleasure of the journey.

It was shortly after this that I wrote my verses on "The Village Lane," as follows, with which I was inspired by the beauties of the lane between Wribbenhall and Trimpley Green:—

Ye anxious crowds, that eager pace  
The most remote of Nature's plains,  
That seek out every unknown place,  
With ceaseless care, despising pains;

Whether on Etna's height ye stand,  
Or roam the banks of sourceless Nile,  
Or seek for Eden's long-lost land,  
Or kiss the pyramidic pile ;  
Leave all your gods, a foreign race,  
That cause such toil, and search, and pain,  
Come! come! with me, and nature trace,  
Amongst the wonders of the Lane!

See in the gurgling stream the power  
That bids the tide recede and flow ;  
See in the snow-drop, modest flower !  
The hand that clothes the Alps with snow.  
The same majestic mighty skill,  
That makes the woods with grandeur swell,  
And decks the lofty Alpine hill,  
Gives beauty to the sweet hare-bell ;  
The humble rush or hay-seed stalk,  
In texture match the Indian cane ;  
Then come with *native nature* walk,  
And view the beauties of the Lane.

The Eastern birds with golden wings,  
Are they more cheering to the eye  
Than our blithe lark that sweetly sings  
Whilst soaring upward to the sky ?  
Here we have no carniv'rous beast,  
Our herds that crop the flowery mead,  
Seek not on other herds to feast,  
Nor long on human flesh to feed ;  
But horse, cow, sheep, partake of food,  
Which nature doth for each ordain ;  
Then leave the wild beasts of the wood,  
And join the tame ones of the Lane.

No noxious Upas-tree you meet,  
The fragrant hawthorn here presides ;  
No deadly viper 'neath your feet,  
In treacherous secrecy resides.  
The leaping frog, the timid mouse,  
The busy squirrel, or the hare,  
The slow-pac'd snail with heavy house,  
Call not for deep suspicious care,

Oh, no ! here philosophic thought  
 May hold an undisturbed reign,  
 With gratitude and pleasure fraught,  
 Amid the beauties of the Lane.

Here, though you see no marble gates,  
 We've those that ornament the scene :  
 Though neither lemons, grapes, nor dates,  
 Grow here,—we've fruit, gold, red, and green ;  
 The apple and the cherry trees,  
 With plums and pears, attract the eye :  
 Each for the palate made to please,  
 In taste and colour seem to vie.  
 Enough of each, enough of all,  
 Then never let us more again  
 Traverse for sights this earthly ball,  
 We've wonders in our Village Lane.

Bridgenorth had a Grammar School, the trustees being the members of the corporation. At the period of my first visit it was largely attended ; there were about 130 scholars, nearly the whole being boarders. The endowment was small, viz., £8 per annum, paid by the Exchequer, a rent-charge of £20 issuing out of lands the property of Mr. Whitmore, and £124 three per cent. consols, the donor being Sir John Hayward, who gave the school £100 in 1635. There was the school-house and a master's house also (valued at £26 per annum), for which a nominal rent of 8s. was paid to Mr. Whitmore ; the total, including the rent of the premises, amounted only to £58. There were three exhibitions attached to it, bequeathed by Edward Careswell, of Bobbington, in 1639, to be conferred on *poor natives* of Shropshire.

The donor of the £100 stated in his will that his father, Sir Rowland Hayward, Lord Mayor of London in 1507, founded the school ; but it appears that it was supported from the revenues of the chantry of St. Leonard, long before 1548, at which date the commissioners recommended the continuance by the examiners of the ancient payment of £8 annually. It was endowed in or before 1624 with the rent charge of £20, probably by Sir Rowland Hayward mentioned above.

The Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, had the power of nominating a qualified person to the mastership, subject to the approval of the corporation.

The boarder element I found kept the towns-people from sending their sons to the school, because some of those who had been sent were treated with contumely by the boarders; there was also an aversion in the minds of the tradesmen to the system of cramming the boys with the classics, to the exclusion of commercial studies.

I found that on the 28th of February, 1841, a committee had been appointed at a Council meeting for the two-fold purpose of inquiring into the existence of certain alleged innovations and abuses of the school, and of considering what reforms could be effected therein by the new Act of Parliament, as to Grammar Schools. This act is known as "Sir Eardley Wilmot's Act."

The following statement was submitted to this committee by Mr. John Trevor, an inhabitant of Bridgenorth:—

"That Sir Rowland Hayward, Knight of London, in the reign of Elizabeth, gave £20 annually to the school; that his second son, Sir John, who was member for the borough gave (in the reign of Charles I.) a legacy of £100 to the school. This legacy was originally secured upon an estate belonging to Earl Powys, called Collygoyt, and produced an income of £6, but it was paid up some years before this date (1841) and invested by the corporation in the 3 per cent. government annuities, and produced £3 14s. 8d. per annum."

In 1817 the corporation resolved to add £30 per annum to the endowments, as an augmentation to the master's salary, and at their request the freemen consented to pay in addition three guineas per annum for each boy that they sent to the school.

In the year 1821 the Rev. Thomas Rowley, D.D., was appointed master of the school; there were only ten scholars then on the foundation, and during the first twenty years of his office he sent eight Bridgenorth and Shropshire-born boys, four

of each, to the Universities on Careswell's foundation. This was a greater number than had been sent during the fifty years before his appointment.

The misfortune of this school was its having so small an endowment, and that, too, an annual cash payment; had it been invested in land by the donor, doubtless the amount of income would have been much greater after the lapse of the last two centuries. The Careswell exhibitions, too, were of very little benefit, seeing that a school with so small an income could not command the services of a master, capable of training boys for the exhibitions. So that unless a succession of spirited masters, such as Dr. Rowley proved himself to be, came forward to make it worth their while by taking boarders, the school must naturally fall to decay.

The bridge over the Severn had a draw port-cullis and other defences in olden times.

Bridgenorth Castle is said to have been erected by Robert de Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury, in order to shield him from the wrath of his royal master. Florence of Worcester states that "he carried on the work night and day, exciting Welshmen to the speedy performance of his wishes by awarding them horses, asses, lands, and all sorts of gifts."

A singular and dangerous looking piece of the castle tower some sixty feet in height, still stands and leans to such a degree that it appears to be in the act of falling into the turnpike road underneath.

Charles I. garrisoned the town, but the parliamentary troops having found their way through the church-yard of St. Leonard drove the royalists into the castle; the chapel of which, called St. Mary-de-Magdalene, had been used by them as a magazine. The troops held out for a month, and when they surrendered on the 26th of April, 1648, they were allowed to march to Worcester.

There was at this time a singular arrangement about the turnpikes between Bewdley and Bridgenorth. The payment of toll at the gate at Wribbenhall freed the traveller at the gate one mile from Bridgenorth, although they were not in the same

county; but there were two more turnpikes between the one-mile-gate and the high-town, viz., one on the bridge, and another on the Castle-hill, at both of which toll had to be paid. Just at the period I began to attend Bridgenorth market, "Rebecca and her men" were pulling down the turnpikes in Wales, night after night, without being discovered. No doubt turnpikes in Wales had become a great nuisance, and they were equally so at Bewdley and Bridgenorth; at the former town there were six gates around and in it, two *in* the town, one on the bridge, and two *in* Wribbenhall, the sixth being on the Dowles road, a few hundred yards from the town. Bridgenorth was equally blessed, thus, one on the bridge, one on the Castle-hill (both payable) and on all the other roads going from the town, there were gates within a few hundred yards of it.

Every person that owned horses in these two districts, wished Rebecca and her men to pay flying visits thereto, and carry away the gates. At Bridgenorth the burgesses elected Mr. Nock to be a Councillor, and he promised them that if ever he was elected Mayor, he would do his best to get one if not both the gates abolished. He was elected twice in succession, and in each year he and his supporters were successful in getting the gates on the bridge and the Castle-hill suppressed.

In the month of August, 1843, the Queen Dowager came to reside at Witley Court, the former residence of the Foley family, then of Baron Ward, whose trustees had purchased it. Through the influence of his agent I was chosen to supply Her Majesty's stables there with corn, hay and straw, as also the deer in the park, with beans. The quantity consumed was large, and nothing but the finest descriptions were used.

During this period I bought a freehold house and garden in Wribbenhall, on the opposite side of the river, which adjoined the warehouses occupied by my employers at the time I first came to Bewdley. These warehouses and the old office and stables I now held, so that I could walk out of the garden to my place of business. Here I bought another horse, (which I rode and drove for 20 years, without his ever "coming down") and finding that



Shrewsbury was my best market to purchase fine oats at, for the Queen Dowager's horses, I occasionally rode there on a Saturday morning (34 miles), and back again in the evening! My horse was never tired, he was slightly over 14 hands high, dark brown in colour, wide in the chest, and had a good stand-up crest; his pace was eight miles an hour, from which he very seldom deviated, but this he could keep up all day long.

I found Shrewsbury a very pleasant market to attend, as I met many of the farmers there who attended Ludlow on the Mondays. One of the best farmers' dining-houses there was the Unicorn; but, like many others, it has been much injured since the railways opened.

I took the journey to Shrewsbury through Wenlock sometimes, and sometimes through Ironbridge; the latter was the longest route by three miles, but it was a much better road. Until I got near Shrewsbury the route was rather lonely, especially in winter, but in summer the scenery beyond Bridgenorth being very grand, compensated for this. On the one route there were the ruins of Wenlock Abbey, and on the other the ruins of Buildwas Abbey.

A body of Cistercian monks built and established Buildwas Abbey; they were a contemplative class, "looking through Nature up to Nature's God"—they were the chroniclers and schoolmasters, the architects and builders of their times, and had their own corn-mill.

Alms to the poor and hospitality to the traveller were part of their daily pleasures; they quarrelled not about Black Gowns or White Gowns, they did not misappropriate the funds bequeathed for the education of the poor, they secluded not themselves in Diocesan Palaces, clothed in purple and fine linen, and fareing sumptuously every day; they had no curates living on starvation salaries and begging second-hand clothes, but carried out the spirit of what has been correctly called the "eleventh commandment" "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

I put my horse up at the Inn near the bridge on the Severn, to have a feed of oats, and ordered some ham and eggs to be cooked, ready upon my return from viewing the ruins of the Abbey.

These were allied in beauty with the scenery around. There was no difference in looking at the landscapes;—east, west, north, and south, all were rich, luxuriant, and in many points bold; and the fine remains of the Abbey arches, pillars, and walls, filled the mind with solemn delight.

In history we are told that the Abbey of Strata Marcella, near the Breiddyn hills, in Wales, and the Abbey of Dunbrody in the county of Kilkenny, Ireland, were subject to Buildwas.

It was a providential blessing for England that such numerous bodies of Monks were scattered over the land in past ages. The very ruins of the buildings they erected attest their talent and industry; and the numerous written records they left behind them, prove that the general title of "lazy monks" is wholly misplaced and ungenerous.

On account of their great importance the Monks were privileged in many ways. Their daily avocations were so numerous that they were exempted from military duties, all county calls and juries, all county rates and tolls, and all contributions to the erection of county castles, jails, or bridges; in fact, they were free from all charges and duties but those attached to their Abbeys, and herein they worked harmoniously and effectively.

Of the ruins, the church in the centre is easily discerned, and the workshops where the duties of industry were carried on (such as are required in building, mill-wright's work, and even in preparing skins for shoe-leather, and clothing for the whole establishment) are still traceable, and there, too, is the stream that turned the mill wheel.

The church was originally of the Norman style, but the pointed arches speak of a later date ere it was completed. The remains of the clerestory were perfect, and the tower with its four arches nearly so; in addition to which the doorways of the monks' dormitories, the eastern cloister, and the archway of the chapter-house, the scribes' offices, the room for audience or conversation between the monks, and the refectory, could be traced, and attested not only the grandeur of the whole edifice, but the great skill of the interior arrangements.

Full of thought I returned to the Inn, where (after seeing that my horse had some clean water) I enjoyed the rashers and the eggs heartily, washed down freely with some home-brew'd, of excellent quality. I must confess that I always felt very loath to leave the neighbourhood of these ruins; I used to walk my horse the first mile or so after my departure, looking back and around with a longing to stay, rather than to reach Shrewsbury, in pursuit of the duties of buying and selling, and getting gain.

I resolved to give up attending Shrewsbury market altogether in favour of Bridgenorth, and on my last journey there, stopped at Wenlock, in order to have a good view of the Abbey ruins. I put my horse up at the Wynnstay Inn, and upon sauntering down the main street, I was astonished at the dead-alive state of the town. Unlike the towns on the Severn between Shrewsbury and Gloucester, at which places the market days are held on Saturdays, at Wenlock they are held on Mondays, so that Saturday is a very quiet day there. The town consists principally of three streets, laid out in the form of a capital T, and many of the houses, and nearly all the intervening walls, stables, outhouses, and pigsties, are built with the stones originally belonging to the Abbey.

I noticed a novel pair of public stocks in the old butter-market; they were built on a moveable platform with four wheels, whereby the culprits, I was told, were wheeled through the main street of the town, preceded by a man with a hand-bell, which he rang loudly to call the attention of the drowsy inhabitants to the delectable procession. This brought Butler's hero Hudibras, and his Esquire Ralpho to mind, and if the stocks in which they were placed were such, no doubt the termagant widow would have rejoiced to see them drawn about, and have followed in their wake.

The Abbey of Wenlock was very rich. It was established by St. Milburg, a grand-daughter of Penda, a Saxon heathen king. Some of our ancient Abbey precincts were safe places for refugees, but the great increase of such persons caused the Abbots to appoint certain places where they could congregate under the

strong shield of the church, and defy the arm of the law. The refuge for Wenlock is still known, and bears the name of "Lawless Cross." It is situated at the junction of the territorial boundaries of the Abbeys of Wenlock and Buildwas.

When the Danes crossed this district, Wenlock Abbey fell into disuse, but Lady Godiva, long after, induced her husband, Earl Leofric, to reinstate it. Once more it became tenantless, but the Normans raised a much more imposing edifice where the old ruins stood. This, too, in its turn fell, and now naught of it remains to tell the tale of its former greatness, but the ruins, grand and imposing in their decay.

The splendid scenery around Wenlock was well suited to the taste of the Saxon Ecclesiastics; they needed not castellated edifices to cause fear in the breasts of their adherents, but sought by the example of good works to win their love. They had been long established in the hearts of the people, but when the Normans came, saw, and conquered, they were forced to raise castles to insure their power over the vanquished, who hated them; nevertheless they built more beautiful Abbeys and church edifices than the Saxons, and Wenlock was one of them.

The Saxons built low, the Normans high, the Saxons plainly, the Normans decorative to a high degree. Wenlock is one of the greatest proofs of their architectural talents; their lancet and triple lancet windows, their mouldings, shafts and pillars, their grand clustering arches, with trefoil heads, their beautiful tracery, richly embossed doorways, double-headed griffins, their galleries with pointed arches, and groups of pilasters, their richly-groined ceilings, and above all their steeples and huge towers left the Saxons far behind, and won for them the admiration and support of the better classes of the conquered.

At Wenlock, as Mr. John Randall, of Madeley, says, in his excellent historical and topographical work "The Severn Valley," everything typical of the original arrangements of the edifice can be found; the dormitories, cloisters, ambulatories, lavatories, refectories, lodges, store-houses, courts, gardens, and fisheries, are all represented by the ruins; and, above all, the grand temple for

worship, and the poor boys' schools and scribes' offices can be distinctly traced. This and such-like buildings still praise the Normans ; and one is led to regret that they were ever brought to ruin, whatever the cause was. Surely the evils which some say had grown up in them did not call for the destruction of the buildings, and we are bound to suspect, if not to believe, that Henry VIII. was led into his Vandal course by the promptings of covetousness and revenge, and not from any sincere desire to reform ecclesiastical abuses.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Let gloomy hearts that never knew  
One touch of laughing mirth,  
Tear-loving eyes, unused to view  
The beauties of the earth,  
Proclaim this life a dreamy vale  
The scene of dark despair,  
My tongue shall tell another tale,  
The world is very fair.

LANGFORD.

AFTER I gave up attending Shrewsbury market I drew large quantities of oats from thence for the use of the Queen Dowager's horses at Witley Court. This, it seems, raised the jealousy of the same person that was salesman to my employers when I first went to Bewdley; he who induced me to ride the pony to Kidderminster market, as narrated at page 34.

He left Bewdley and went to live at Shrewsbury when my employer's brother took to that business, and had established himself very easily, as he had attended that market before, and during my clerkship with the same firm at Bewdley.

My agency to my old employers enabled me at this time to sell to Mr. Nock, an extensive corn dealer, of Bridgenorth, wholesale quantities of Irish oats and Gloucestershire grown beans, which he, to some extent, sold to purchasers in the district between Bridgenorth and Shrewsbury. This interfered with the trade of the above-mentioned Bewdley salesman, and he wrote a letter to my principals, warning them as to the responsibility of Mr. Nock.

At this very moment there was a barge load of corn coming up the river Severn from them, which I had sold on commission to Mr. Nock. They very injudiciously stopped the barge on the way, and sent their principal clerk from Birmingham to my house,

with the letter they had received from Shrewsbury. I was very indignant, as Mr. Nock was a most respectable tradesman, whose credit had never been doubted, and I proposed to meet the clerk on the next Saturday at Bridgenorth to have the matter cleared up personally.

Having known the writer for so long a period, I was puzzled as to whether he was right or not in his apprehensions as to Mr. Nock's responsibility. The clerk from Birmingham called, when he went to Bridgenorth, upon Messrs. Pritchards, the bankers, upon whom Mr. Nock drew his cheques, and they told him enough to satisfy him that Mr. Nock's credit was not to be doubted. The barge was then ordered on, but Mr. Nock, on the refusal of my principals to give up the name of his maligner, entered an action against them, which was eventually settled by reference, for which they paid a certain sum for damages and all the costs.

Strange to say, although he knew I was aware that he was the writer of the calumnious letter against Mr. Nock, he wrote to him against me, to the same effect that he had written to my principals, as narrated above.

Mr. Nock received this letter on a Saturday morning, and as soon as I arrived he placed it before me. I was thunder-struck, and felt no hesitation then in telling him that this letter came from the same hand that had written the letter, with intent to injure him, in the previous case.

Upon this Mr. Nock proposed that he and I should go to Shrewsbury to see the writer and to punish him personally for his malignity. According to arrangement I drove my horse and gig on the next Saturday morning to Bridgenorth, and Mr. Nock drove me and his nephew in his double-bodied gig and pair to Shrewsbury. After putting up, we walked to our malicious friend's office. He was in the act of drawing a cheque for a farmer, but no sooner did we enter the office than he dropped his pen, and went out of it by another door, and we saw no more of him. We expected him to appear on the market, and were prepared to administer some well-deserved personal chastisement, if he came, but he never appeared.

Some years after I happened to be in Shrewsbury, and heard that he was not expected to live long. I therefore called to tell him that I wished him to know that I forgave him, but he sent down word that he could not see me.

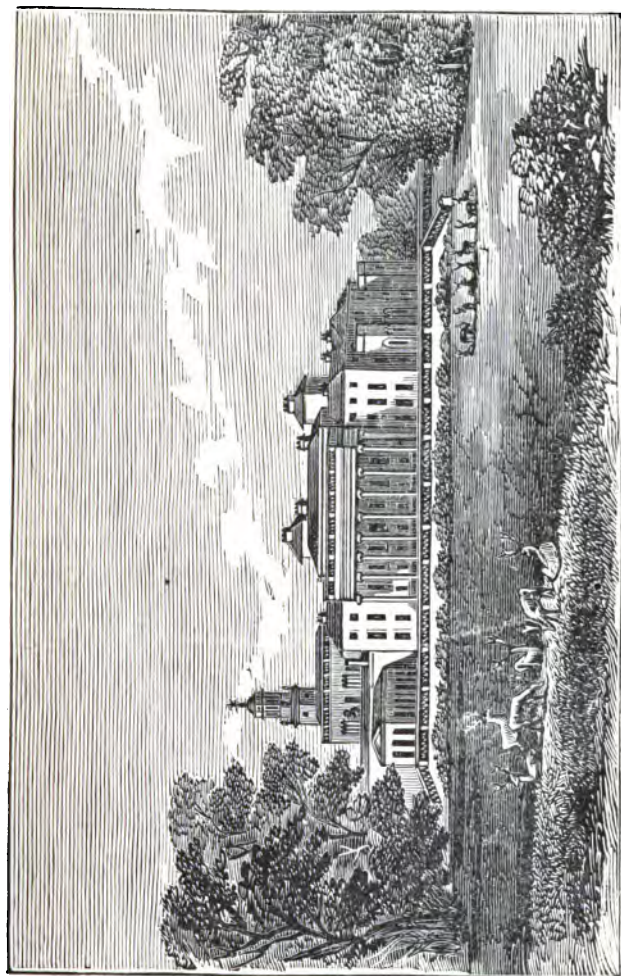
It was the custom for the tradesmen who supplied the Queen Dowager's establishment at Witley Court, to dine there very frequently. This I of course availed myself of so often as I could, as the distance was only nine miles, and I felt desirous of mixing with the superior society of her numerous attendants. They were very agreeable people, and everything was free from any stiffness or self-complacency.

The nearest way to Witley was through Bewdley and Ribbesford, on the west side of the Severn; thence to Dunley and the Hundred-House Inn, where I generally called to see the landlord, Mr. Bunce, an oddity in his way.

The horses belonging to Her Majesty (some 32 in number) having arrived a day or two before the stipulated time, there was no corn ready for their use. An order was therefore sent up to the Hundred-House Inn, for a day and a night's supply, but he would not let them have more than two bushels of oats. A messenger was at once sent off to me, and I started a waggon load without delay. The morose landlord was never forgiven by the grooms and coachmen, and his Inn was very rarely visited by them. He grumbled often too, at Her Majesty hiring sets of post-horses from him occasionally (which she did for his benefit) saying that it was very strange she should want his horses when she had so many of her own! This and the exorbitant charges for refreshments supplied to the people (who came in large numbers to get a glimpse of the Queen) made him a perfect trouble on all hands, and had it not been that he was an old man and an old tenant, he would not have been allowed to remain.

The Queen Dowager, during her widowhood, gave a great impulse to the building and repairing of churches throughout the kingdom, by promoting and largely contributing to such works, and her steward told me that she made it a rule never to have





WITLEY COURT.



£20 of her income left in hand on the last day of each year. She was very delicate in health, and in fact not able to walk, but she went out very frequently in her small open carriage, drawn by four splendid ponies, accompanied by a lady in waiting or two in her carriage, and two equerries on horseback in the rear. This equipage in all its arrangements was the most beautiful I ever saw, either in town or country. Her Majesty remained at Witley Court until Lady-day, 1846, and then left, to the great regret of all, and the great loss to the trade of the district.

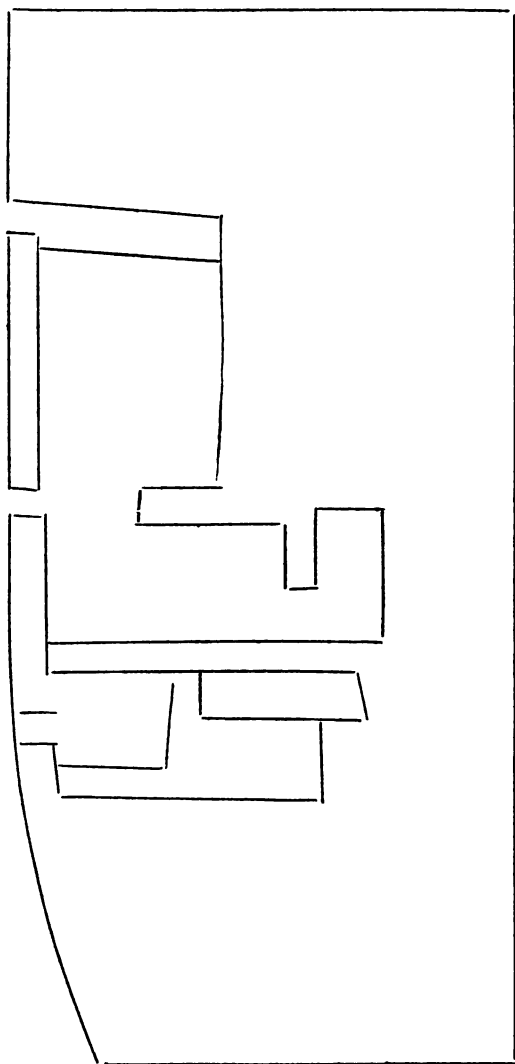
At this period I was told by a literary friend that the Hermitage at Blackstone deserved some special notice. He did not approve of my making the Hermit wear the cloak of sanctity, whilst he was daily waiting and watching to revenge himself on the murderer of his betrothed. That was no uncommon thing, and even in the present day, persons of religious demeanour often wear two heads under one hood. Upon reflection I agreed with my friend, as the revenge of Sir Harry Wade upon the Refugee, related at pages 99 and 100, had really nothing characteristic of a *true* Hermit's life. I therefore promised my friend to write some lines, which were as follows :—

THE HERMIT OF BLACKSTONE.

A quiet old Hermit, I live here alone,  
In my Hermitage rock at famous Blackstone,  
Yet, many companions e'en visit me here,  
The rabbit, the hare, and the sleek fallow deer ;  
Contented and happy I love my lone cell,  
And envy not those who in palaces dwell,

Whilst living alone  
In famous Blackstone.

What care I for wealth, I have plenty of food,  
What care I for station, 'tis great to be good,  
What care I for grandeur, 'twill always decay,  
And like the bright rainbow, it lives not a day,  
Nor splendour nor fashion e'er enter my cell,  
A quiet old hermit at Blackstone I dwell,  
Contented, alone,  
At famous Blackstone.



THE GROUND PLOT AND SECTION OF THE HERMITAGE NEAR BEWDLEY.

Let others for plunder go plough the salt deep,  
My sea is the Severn that lulls me to sleep.  
Let others for riches on India's soil  
Go live an existence of wealth-heaping toil ;  
They know not the joys that I find in my cell,  
Else they'd give up their cares in quiet to dwell,  
Like me all alone  
At famous Blackstone.

Let others, too, dive into learning's deep well,  
I seek for my lessons in forest and dell,  
The lanes and the meadows are laden with lore.  
The uplands and dingles I see from my door  
Teach lessons more pleasing than Oxford can tell,  
Or all the famed cities where sciences dwell.  
I study alone  
In famous Blackstone.

I wish not in crowds nor in tumults to dwell,  
Nor riot, nor anger, shall enter my cell,  
I care not for courts nor their tinsel parade,  
They foster but anguish, they rise but to fade ;  
Whilst the oak that o'ershadows the door of my cell,  
Grows stronger and firmer each year that I dwell,  
So happy alone,  
At famous Blackstone.

Then leave your false joys, all ye sons of the earth,  
Come visit my cell, I will find you true mirth,  
The mirth that belongs to a well-temper'd mind,  
The pleasures that spring from a heart well refined  
Contented and happy I love my lone cell,  
And envy not those who in palaces dwell,  
Whilst living alone  
In famous Blackstone.

The doorway of the hermitage is rather low, and as you enter, the kitchen is on the right hand. It was the custom to cook the food on the floor, and the chimney, cut clean up through the rock, remained still perfect ; you afterwards enter the pantry, over which there is a chamber, then an inner room with closets over it, a study with book-shelves, and a second opening in the

rock supposed to have been used as a belfry. At the left of the entrance door there is the chapel; the altar had been destroyed, but a small window remains over where it stood, and affords a little light.

The years 1845 and 1846 were famous for the birth of railway schemes, which proved ruinous to many families. There were no less than 27 schemes set on foot for the county of Worcester alone. The "Battle of the Gauges" was fought in the first-named year, and caused a vast excitement through the whole country.

This battle arose from two opposition lines being projected from London to the "Black Country." The narrow gauge project was called the Tring line, from its starting point being at that station, on the London and Birmingham line. It was proposed that it should run from thence to Worcester, Stourport, Kidderminster, Cookley, Kinver, past the lower end of Stourbridge, and thence to Wolverhampton. The broad gauge line, known as the "Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton," started from Oxford, through Evesham, Worcester, Kidderminster, and Stourbridge, and thence through the "Black Country."

I was served with a notice to appear as a witness on behalf of the narrow gauge project, and as the committee met on a Monday I had to leave home on the Saturday evening.

At this period there was no railway nearer to us for London than Birmingham, and the Ludlow and Birmingham evening mail was the only means we had of getting to the latter place. There was of course a pleasure to me in travelling by it, as I was in the habit of doing so, as stated at page 108, and of sitting by the same coachman every Monday to and from Ludlow.

I went to Bridgenorth market on this day as usual, and returned in time for the evening mail. I had only an hour to get ready, and what was my surprise and chagrin to find that during my absence an Inspector of Weights and Measures had called at my warehouses, and finding my weights and measures not stamped, told his two men to put them in a hired cart and take them to a depôt at Kidderminster.

Having had no notice as to stamping, and the Act only being

just put into operation, I was quite ignorant of any liability. I told my warehouseman to get new weights and measures, and was at my door waiting for the coach, when the Inspector and his two men came round the corner. I asked him why he dared to enter my premises in my absence and take my property away, instead of awaiting my return? He was very insolent. I asked him what authority he had for such an improper proceeding, upon which he shewed me his appointment. I felt convinced that there was some irregularity in his proceeding, and I told him that if he did not return my property at once, I should take steps on my return from London to bring him before the authorities for excess of duty. Whilst we were talking, the coach drove up, and, much against my will, I was obliged to mount it.

The Committee Room of the House of Commons, in which the Battle of the Gauges was fought, was well occupied every day. The Tring project or Narrow-Gauge was the favorite, as the Railway Commissioners of the Board of Trade had reported on February 4th, this year, viz., 1845, in its favor, and against the Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton, or the Broad-Gauge. The latter was at first proposed to end at Banbury, but this was ultimately changed for Oxford.

The Battle began on the 5th of May. The members of the committee of the House of Commons were the Right Honourable F. Shaw (Dublin University), chairman; Messrs. Bramston, Home Drummond, Villiers Stuart, and Lockhart. The lines brought before them were:—

#### BROAD GAUGE.

- 1.—Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton Railway.
- 2.—Oxford and Rugby Railway.

#### NARROW GAUGE.

- 3.—London, Worcester, and Rugby and Oxford Railway.
- 4.—Birmingham and Gloucester Railway—Worcester Branch and Deviation.
- 5.—Birmingham and Gloucester Railway—Wolverhampton Extension.
- 6.—London, Worcester, and South Staffordshire Railway—the Tring line.
- 7.—Grand Junction—Dudley Branch, Shrewsbury and Stafford, and Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton.
- 8.—Shrewsbury and Birmingham Railway.

All the railway interests of the country thought themselves interested in the decision of the committee, and brought their forces to bear upon the battle; inasmuch as it was inferred that it would decide to which of the gauges the preference should be given in coming railway economics, and so to be of vital importance to the opposing systems and the great companies connected with them. For months prior to this contest the press had swarmed with pamphlets, some contending that a greater power, speed, and safety could be attained upon the Broad Gauge; others requiring a uniformity of gauge throughout the country, and pointing out the inconvenience of a break of gauge at Gloucester and elsewhere; but the decision of the committee had very little reference to any of these matters, and was clearly influenced by different considerations. The principal counsel employed were Mr. Talbot and Mr. Cockburn (the present Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench), for the Broad Gauge line; Mr. C. Austin and Sergeant Wrangham for the Narrow Gauge line; Mr. Daniell for the Birmingham and Gloucester; and Mr. Kinglake for the Great Western Company; besides innumerable others. Mr. Austin opened the case on behalf of the London and Birmingham line to Tring, which he contended was all that the district could require; that it would be absurd to introduce the Broad Gauge north of Birmingham; and, lastly, that the Board of Trade had reported in its favour. The witnesses connected with Worcestershire, who were summoned in its favour, were Mr. R. Smith, mining agent to Lord Ward (whose interests had been especially consulted in this scheme); Mr. William Hancocks, ironmaster, Cookley; Mr. W. Barrows, ironmaster, Dudley; Mr. E. Williams, miller, Dudley; Mr. W. B. Best, Kidderminster; Mr. Henry Brinton, carpet manufacturer, Kidderminster; Mr. Harris, carpet manufacturer, Stourport; Mr. Heath, Severn carrier, of Stourport; Mr. Griffith, corn merchant, of Wribbenhall (Bewdley); Mr. Lewty, manager of the Wilden Tin Works near Stourport; Mr. H. B. Tymbs, Mr. John Hood, Mr. A. Wells, Mr. James Wall, and Mr. J. W. Lea, Worcester; Mr. E. Smith, gardener, Evesham, &c. Mr. Daniell then opened the



case for the Birmingham and Gloucester Company's Deviation line, and examined Mr. M. Pierpoint, who said that he believed this and the Tring line would be all that the citizens of Worcester would want, and would answer their interests better than the Broad Gauge line. Mr. W. Chamberlain and Mr. Robert Hardy, with Mr. Tombs, of Droitwich, Mr. George Griffith, of Bewdley, and in fact all the persons summoned, were also examined by Mr. Daniell. Mr. Cockburn then called witnesses in favour of the Great Western Company's Broad Gauge projects: they were Mr. James Boydell, Oak Farm Iron Works, Kingswinford; Mr. Jonathan Fardon, Stoke Works; Rev. W. H. Cartwright, Dudley; Mr. Paul Matthews, Stourbridge; Mr. John Hill, Mr. Alderman Edward Evans, Mr. William Lewis (Mayor), Mr. Henry Webb, Mr. Leader Williams, of Worcester; and Mr. T. N. Foster, of Evesham. After the committee had sat twenty days, they reported that they found the preamble of the Broad Gauge project, and of the Oxford and Rugby lines, proved: and those of the railways promoted by the London and Birmingham, with the Birmingham and Gloucester Deviation line, not proved. They evidently came to this decision from a belief that the Broad Gauge lines were so planned as best to answer the wants of the districts through which they passed, and that the public favour had been generally accorded them on that ground. The avowed intention of the Great Western Company to carry out a line to Port Dynllaen, had also probably some influence with the committee, a tale trumped up to serve a purpose, for no attempt was ever made to carry it out as promised. The greatest excitement prevailed during the whole of the inquiry—no change of ministry ever created greater—in the lobbies of the house, and the result seemed to be very unexpected, as shares in the Tring line went up considerably a day or two before the decision was given. The committee were occupied some days longer in considering the clauses of the Oxford Company's Bill, and gave the Birmingham and Gloucester Company power to use the loop line at Worcester, at a remuneration to be fixed by umpires. It being known that the

London and Birmingham Company intended to oppose the Oxford Bill in the House, petitions in favour of that line were sent up from Worcester, Droitwich, Dudley, Blockley, and Chipping-Campden. Lord Ingestre moved that the report on the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway Bill be brought up. Mr. Pakington seconded the motion. Mr. Cobden moved, as an amendment, that an address be presented to Her Majesty to appoint a commission to inquire into the comparative merits of the Broad and Narrow Gauges. Colonel Wood seconded the amendment, which, after much debate, was lost by 247 to 113, and the Oxford Railway Bill was read a second time. Its triumph was hailed with great rejoicings in Worcestershire.

The Bill had a comparatively easy passage through the House of Lords, though strenuously opposed in committee by the London and Birmingham Company, and on the 4th of August it received the royal assent. Its various successes were occasions of excited rejoicings in Worcester.

After the Narrow Gauge defeat in the House of Commons committee room, its supporters carried it before a committee of the House of Lords, and all the witnesses were re-summoned. I found the committee of the Lords much better men of business than the Commons' Committee. This was not only my opinion, but the general one. The same barristers were of course employed, but they were very different in their style of examining the witnesses, and addressing the committee.

In the Commons every witness was sworn, and in their turn bullied, more or less, by one or other of the "gentlemen of the long robe," and even some of the committee, particularly the chairman, made now and then very offensive remarks to the witnesses; but in the Lords the witnesses were not sworn, and the barristers were as polite as possible; in fact, we could scarcely imagine they were the same men; and the committee confined themselves strictly to the merits of the two projects.

This attendance in the Lords' committee room was a great treat; those two eminent engineers, Stephenson and Brunel, were examined at great length; the walls of the room were covered

with maps, to which continual references were made. The former stated his views as to the comparative cost of the two projects, and the superiority of the route of the Narrow Gauge; the latter contradicted everything he stated, and told the committee that to avoid the change of the passengers and luggage from the Narrow to the Broad Gauge, at the stations, he had built an engine and a carriage with telescope axles, and at his urgent request five of the witnesses were deputed to go with him and other engineers, to see them in operation.

The rails of course widened little by little from the narrow to the Broad Gauge; it was a very ingenious contrivance, but the five witnesses declared against it, on account of the danger that they thought would arise from the axles breaking in the sliding from one gauge to the other, and it never was used after the experiments made with it, being merely a project got up to serve a turn, and laid aside directly afterwards.

In the course of time Mr. Stephenson's calculations as to the much greater costliness of the Broad Gauge, and the return to a uniform Narrow Gauge, have all been more than verified.

I must not omit to record here that Mr. Knight, in the *Worcestershire Chronicle*, supported the Narrow Gauge line, with great weight of argument and perseverance. The correctness of the views he advocated have long since been made apparent, and have secured universal acceptance, though he was exposed at the time to considerable local obloquy, the inhabitants of Worcester having previously set their hearts on having the Broad Gauge line, which proved to some of them a disastrous speculation.

Mr. Knight argued, at the time, that it was impossible that a Broad Gauge line could serve, or supply, the wants of the district; that the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton (oh! Worse and Worser, as it was called) never could, or would, be worked on the Broad Gauge, and *it never was*. The justice of his conclusions has been irrefragably established by the event, but the decision of the Parliament caused millions to be spent in waste (the total amount of capital up to 1854 being no less than £3,437,676) and the West Midland district to be

supplied much less efficiently than it might have been, at greatly less cost. In those days the Broad Gauge was "on the high horse"—rampant, insolent, bullying, now it has fallen on evil days, been dragged in the dirt, condemned, banished, and has well nigh wrought the ruin of its promoters.

We were put to no expense as witnesses. A free train took us to London, and brought us back again to Birmingham, and we had nothing to pay at our hotel; and as the Narrow Gauge was defeated, we said nothing about our loss of time. Yet, to our surprise, we all received cheques on Christmas morning in the following year for thirty guineas in each case, with the thanks of the London and Birmingham Railway Company for our services.

During my stay in London I did not forget the conduct of the Inspector of Weights and Measures, and took the opportunity one day of asking a Counsellor what he thought of it. He was surprised at the case, and said that I had better get a copy of the Act, and see if it contained a clause, requiring the Inspector to find securities, for performing the duties of his office legally, and then to inquire if he had procured these securities, which, if he had not done, his conduct would make him liable to an action for trespass, and to damages for taking the weights and measures away.

On my return I wrote to the Deputy Clerk of the Peace for the county, and received an answer stating that the securities (of two householders) had not been given in by the Inspector. Thereupon I consulted with my neighbours, whose weights and measures had also been seized, and enjoined them to secrecy as to the securities. We agreed to subscribe equally to bear the expenses of the hearing before the county magistrates.

I engaged Mr. Saunders, a solicitor, of Kidderminster, to defend us, and on the day appointed all the defendants, and many neighbours, were in the magistrates' room. The chairman, on the first case being called on, proposed that in order to save time we should plead guilty, and that a nominal fine would in that case be inflicted. Our advocate refused to do so, and all the weights and measures were brought in to be tested in rotation.

This was very annoying to the Bench, as it kept them there for six or seven hours ; and, when the testing was over, our advocate warned the magistrates not to convict, as he had a good defence. To this they at first demurred, as they were heartily tired, but he told them he must ask the Inspector a question that would very likely save him the unpleasant duty of entering actions against the magistrates should they convict.

The Inspector was then requested by Mr. Saunders to hand up his appointment warrant to the Bench, which he did ; he then asked him for the names of his securities, which produced a great alteration in his countenance, as he had to declare that he had none. The magistrates thereupon ordered him to pay all the expenses, to return the weights and measures from whence he had taken them, and to make an ample apology if he wished to avoid further proceedings.

This he did the next day, and from that time he never visited us. The end was a dinner at which all the defendants enjoyed themselves very much over the victory.



## CHAPTER IX.

Well observe

The rule of not too much, by temperance taught  
In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence  
Due nourishment, no gluttonous delight.

MILTON.

I HAVE often felt aggrieved at the melancholy termination of the lives of some of our greatest writers. These sad events I believe have, in many cases, been brought about from an excess of in-door work, and neglecting to secure a necessary quantity of fresh air and exercise, either on foot or on horseback, or both.

Many a time I have been asked how I found leisure and opportunity, with my incessant attention to business at markets, and in my trade office, to write the books, pamphlets, and newspaper letters, on the question of the Grammar Schools that appeared during so many years, to say nothing of my metrical and dramatic writings. My reply was, that the travelling to markets, and getting good market dinners, kept me in health, and that my writings might very well be called, "Relaxations from the cares of trade." I believe that if I had entirely given myself up to literary employment, for which by-the-bye all good critics can see by this volume I was not fitted, I should not have succeeded in gaining bread, nor have lived so long.

I was very thin and of light weight for many years, indeed I may say up to 26 years of age, but at the same time I was abstemious, except when I met occasionally such companions at market as Tam O'Shanter or Souther Johnny. The activity required by my peculiar trade, the exercise on horseback for long distances, the fondness I always had for bathing, and I may add

the pride I took in thinking and acting for myself, were all conducive to health of body and health of mind. In-door employment would have soon sent me to that bourne from whence no traveller has ever returned (except Hamlet's father), so that it was very providential for me that going to markets was my destiny.

The best company that I ever mingled with at a country market-table, was that which assembled at the Crown Inn, at Bridgenorth, at that time conducted by Mr. Nock, the corn-dealer and auctioneer. If any of my readers should happen to be at that town on any Saturday, I strongly recommend them to dine at the Crown, and I venture to say they will declare that they never sat down to a better dinner, nor with a more congenial set of men in their lives.

There was one person from the neighbourhood of Wenlock that used to dine there very often. I was told that he combined farming with malting when at home, but when at the Crown table he most certainly combined heavy eating with heavy drinking. It is said that the famous Abernethy, when asked his opinion as to the effects of heavy drinking, in opposition to those of heavy eating, declared that he always found it less difficult to expel a pipe of wine from a man than a bullock; but what would he have said if he had been asked as to the effects of both on one man.

This was the case with this visitor to the Crown, he ate and drank inordinately; soup, fish, joints, poultry, puddings, pies, and bread and cheese and celery, were impartially treated by him, and at the same time he kept talking between every mouthful, as to what he had eaten at such and such a place, what he had drunk, and what it had cost him.

He was a real gourmand, and had evidently studied the pursuit historically, poetically, and intrinsically. He often quoted Plato's remark with great relish—

How keenly I watch for a feast in the town,  
And, welcome or not, I am sure to sit down.

As the different courses were brought to table, he always had some illustrative quotation ready. Thus when the fish appeared :

Never stew a sardine,  
 Or mackerel of silv'ry sheen,  
 Lest the gods should scorn a sinner,  
 Such as you, and spoil your dinner ;  
 But dress them whole and serve them up,  
 And so you shall most richly sup.  
 Mullet, though the taste is good,  
 Is by far too weakening food ;  
 And the ills it brings, to master  
 You will need a scorpion plaster !

When a pickled fish was introduced, he exclaimed—

Oh, charming sight ! hence vulgar crowd.

If a skinned eel—

Beauty when unadorned 's adorn'd the most.

When the joints appeared—

Happy am I who never have cause,  
 To refuse to put good meat in my jaws.

But a cucumber was his great delight, he always saluted it thus :

This is my honest declaration,  
 Only two things in all creation,  
 Are tender during the whole of life,  
 A good cucumber, and a good wife.

Port wine was his chief favorite. When it appeared, he exclaimed, turning to me—

Eating always brings on choking,  
 To cure which take a turn at soaking,

And after every glass he had a quotation, such as—

There is, I take it, sparkling joys in wine,  
 And those are stupid who on water dine.

He was, I presume, never troubled with the gout, as he asserted that—

For all the ills that men endure,  
 Good old Port's a certain cure.

And, addressing me with a knowing wink, and a whisper as to my scribbling propensities, he said that all writers found wine to be an essential aid to composition—

If with water you fill up your glasses,  
 You'll never write anything wise,  
 But wine is the horse of Parnassus,  
 That carries a bard to the skies.





BRIDGENORTH.

His personal appearance agreed well with his appetites ; his dark hair and swarthy features, broad chest and shoulders, full eyes and lips, long arms and short legs, all betokened a constitutional desire for, and a love of good eating and drinking.

Soon after I went to reside at Wribbenhall, I was invited by my friend, Mr. George Winnall, a highly-respected farmer, of Elmley-Lovett, to dine at his residence. In the course of our conversation I asked him as to the condition of the foundation school, founded by William Norris, in 1702.

He told me that it had gone down a good deal since he knew it first ; that in his young days the farmers' sons as well as the labourers' sons attended it, but that now only the latter found their way there.

I saw that he was rather averse to talk about the case, so I made a special journey to the school on horseback soon after. On doing so, I found it was conducted by Mr. B. Richards, the parish clerk, and his daughter (both intelligent persons). There were about 16 boys and 8 girls in it, who paid one penny per week for learning to read, and twopence per week if they wrote. The walls of the school-room were built of stone thick enough for a castle ; several windows were plastered over with some white substance ; and, from the miserable state of the building, one would fancy it was built, and plastered, so as to resist the united powers of fresh air, health, and prosperity, from entering therein. For my own part, I could only conclude that, in this case, as in many others, it might be said of the Trustees " we always take it for granted, that so long as we are let alone, everybody sees a thing just as we see it."

I found on inquiry, that in the years 1839 and 1840, the Trustees had consented to mortgage the charity funds of the parish, for the purpose of rebuilding the body of the church.

These funds embraced three objects, viz., the *repairs* of the church, the education of the children, and the relief of the poorest old people of the parish. They amounted to about £131 per annum, and had been divided as follows :—

The Schoolmaster	...	...	£80	0	0
The Poor	...	...	40	0	0
The Church Repairs	...	...	10	10	0

By the new arrangement, the schoolmaster's income was reduced thus—

Salary	...	...	...	£20	0	0
24 Scholars 1d. each per week	}					
48 weeks		...	...	4	16	0
Value of Rent for House	...	...	...	5	0	0

The money expended on the church was £1600. What the rate of interest charged by the lender was, I could not ascertain, but the above figures will show that £102 was diverted from the charity income, and doubtless went to pay the mortgagee.

On referring to the Charity Commissioners' Report I found by an inquisition held at Worcester in the seventh year of the reign of Charles I. that after the *repairs* of the church had been paid for, the remainder was to be divided into three equal parts, two parts for the schoolmaster, and one part for the poor. This arrangement was carried out until 1839.

It seemed very strange to me that the school should be thus sacrificed to "Mother Church." The living (then held by the Rev. H. Perceval, son of the statesman who was shot in the House of Commons by Bellingham), was worth some £600 per annum, and was in the gift of Christ's College, Cambridge; I asked why the rector did not contribute liberally, and get the college and the parishioners to do so, in order to keep the school up? but this had never been proposed, although many of the farmers themselves had been educated therein in former days.

The duties of the rector could not be very expensive to him, as the population was only 380. Then there were the 17 respectable trustees, it was strange that they did not lay their heads together, and put their hands in their pockets to save the school.

The £1600 were laid out on the walls and roof of the body of the church alone, as the pews had been erected about 20 years previously; this was a large sum.

Verily "Mother Church" was not a very kind parent to the

children and the poor of Elmley-Lovett. To curtail their education, and take the bread of the poor, in order to make the free pew-holders comfortable one day in seven, was not a very motherly proceeding, and should have been the very reverse in all points.

In consequence of my heavy business, I had almost forgotten my flute, and my fondness for French translation. I had a neighbour who was a very superior flute-player, and who, although his duties must have been very onerous, often found time to delight all around with his splendid playing. One evening particularly, he played "Robin Adair," again and again, upon which I wrote the following Acrostic, and sent him a copy the next morning:—

R—epeat that love-lorn plaintive strain,  
O—h let once more each soothing note,  
B—eguile the evening hour again,  
I—nfusing joy where'er they float.  
N—ever may Robin's case be thine,

A—true heart may thy choice possess,  
D—evotion with pure love combine,  
A—nd seek thy life throughout to bless.  
I—n all may both unite to prove,  
R—esponsive, true, domestic love.

I also had the pleasure of being acquainted with a poetic neighbour—a young lady, who resided opposite my house in Wribbenhall. Her album contained some of her own productions, which displayed great poetic talent, and at her request I contributed a few lines. They were nearly as follows:—

TO S. P. FROM G. G.

I own that I promised to write you a sketch,  
But really I scarce can tell how;  
My Pegasus proves at this moment a wretch,  
I cannot impel him, I vow.  
He stumbles and kicks, he's sulky and blind,  
And threatens to come to the ground,  
But I'll just use my spurs to put him in mind,  
That by trickery I'm not to be bound.

See now he's more nimble and prances about,  
See, off he goes now as by steam,  
We all have our fits of dull langour no doubt,  
Too oft so in starting a theme.  
But what shall I write? 'tis really most strange,  
These beginnings should give us such trouble,\*  
Well, give me one minute my thoughts to arrange,  
And then I'll produce such a—bubble.

To Love or to Friendship most scribblers are prone,  
To dedicate some of their lays,  
But neither for me has attractions, I own ;  
No, neither *alone* will I praise,  
For Friendship's too cold for hearts such as thine,  
Too formal in all its appealing,  
And Love is too fervid, so why not combine  
Them both, to produce truest feelings.

The one, it is said, binds man unto man,  
And makes them congenial as brothers ;  
Whilst Love is the only infallible plan,  
By which Cupid all our sense smothers.  
Mere Friendship is often deceitful, I fear,  
And brings us much bitter correction,  
Whilst Love is so blind that we cannot see clear,  
Nor detect the most gross imperfection.

So thus in your album a plant you may rear,  
In Friendship no doubt, *sans* defect,  
Then graft thereupon a slip of sincere  
Native Love, grown by true self-respect.  
And long may it flourish as pure as that state  
Of the mind first implanted in Eve,  
Unsullied by Love that's oft turned to deep hate,  
Or by Friendship that's prone to deceive.

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\* Nothing so difficult as a beginning  
In Poesy, unless perhaps the end ;  
For oftentimes when Pegasus seems winning  
The race, he sprains a wing and down we tend.

As I had never had a thoroughly good survey of Ribbesford Church and Churchyard I devoted a whole morning to it on one fine summer's day. I allowed nothing to stop me on the way, and knowing that the Curate's two sisters would be there, I calculated upon getting plenty of information.

These two ladies (the Misses Crane) took great pride in cleaning the church pews with their own hands, and when I arrived there I found them as busy as bees, with their linen dusters and brushes.

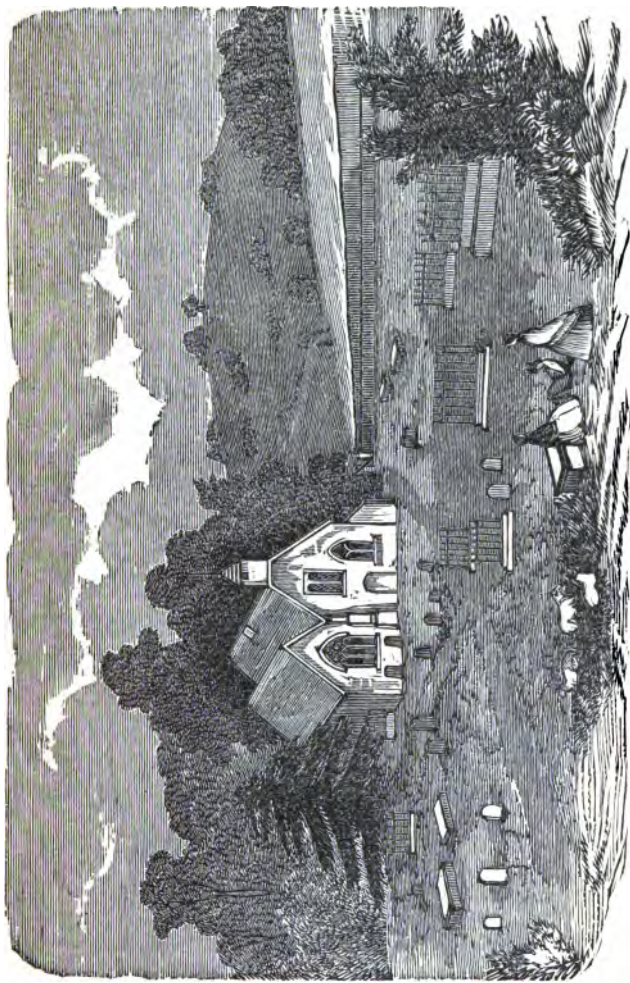
They happened to live next door to the house I formerly occupied, so that no introductory formality was necessary. I told them my errand, and they entered into my feelings with great zest. They shewed me the pulpit, a very old one, under which there was a carving of a fox preaching to some poultry, and a sow playing on a bagpipes, to a family of pigs, which were dancing around her. What these meant I could not fathom, so I concluded that the one was a satire upon pulpit oratory, and the other a slap at church music.

The church consists of a chancel, two aisles, and a nave; most of the pillars and arches of the latter are of wood, and rather rude in their dressings. The north aisle anciently was a chapel. The pews were very irregular, some being large enough to hold the before-mentioned sow and pigs, had they been real flesh and blood.

The vestry was a novelty, bearing a resemblance to a wooden shed, upon which the least possible amount of workmanship had been bestowed.

They shewed me the two most ancient monuments in the chancel, the one, that of a family of the name of Soley, bearing the date of 1604, and the other to John Tiler, gentleman, "late bailiffe of Bewdley," dated 1626. There were also some portions of the windows occupied by the arms of the Herberts, of whom more anon, and a stained-glass compartment of St. George and the Dragon.

Coming outside of the church they pointed out an erect stone placed against the south wall, with a cross carved on it of the full length, where the Friars used to preach their sermons to the



**RIBBESFORD CHURCH, NEAR BEWDLEY.**

"I love these churchyard wanderings, here I sit  
And read the silent lessons round me spread ;

A churchyard is a map or chart most fit  
Whereby the living trav'ler may be led."

people. The north entrance is a wooden porch, whereon the initials "T. M. 1633, H. W." were engraved. The doorway resembles Norman sculpture, with an eagle fastening on a bird, and striking his beak into its head; a salmon is underneath the bird, and another above the eagle.

On the tympanum of the door arch is the figure of an archer in bas-relief, with a doe, and also a fish, no doubt a salmon, through which the arrow of the archer passed. A tradition has been handed down that the archer, Robin of Horsehill, was shooting at a doe, which was standing near the Hermitage of Blackstone, on the opposite side of the Severn, and that just at the moment a salmon leaped up, and the arrow passed through it and killed the doe also.

The editors of the "Beauties of England and Wales" labour to shew that it is not a salmon but a seal. This story is improbable, because such a thing as a seal in a river so far inland cannot be proved; it is very easy to doubt the tradition, but more unlikely things have occurred than for an arrow to pass through a fish when shot at a doe on the opposite side of a river. If the editors had but made the allowance due to the effects of weather for some centuries, upon a piece of bas-relief, they need not have given themselves so much trouble in doubting, nor have drawn upon themselves so much ridicule for their threadbare ingenuity.

Dwelling upon this tradition, I resolved to give it some more prominent characteristics, and shortly after my visit wrote the following. It is necessary to state that Tickenhill Palace, or Hall, was called Tun-hill by some in past times.

Old Tunhill's halls rung with delight,  
And merry were the souls  
That met upon that festiye night,  
To drain Sir Herbert's bowls;  
For fair Honora had that morn  
Seen twenty-one birth-days,  
And many friends both grave and gay  
Joined in the dance's maze,  
That joyous night.



But there was one amongst the group,  
Deaf both to laugh and jest,  
Absorb'd in thought he silent sate,  
A poor and silent guest ;  
Young Robin, though a fisher's son,  
Was noble born in mind,  
And long his love had dwelt upon  
The best of womankind,  
With fond delight.

Right merrily all healths were drunk,  
But merrier far than all,  
When bold Sir Herbert, Tunhill's host,  
Honora's health would call ;  
Full were their horns and full their hearts,  
To toast the lovely maid ;  
But none like Robin felt the name,  
And none so quick obey'd  
The toast that night,

" Now here I swear," Sir Herbert cried,  
" I swear before you all,  
That he who makes Honora bride,  
Must first obey her thrall ;  
Her fav'rite diamond ring is lost,  
And he that doth it find,  
Shall with her hand be quickly blest,  
Let him be peer or hind,  
By all that's bright."

Young Robin heard these words with joy,  
And at the morning's dawn  
Went forth to seek the golden toy,  
With step as light as fawn ;  
His bow and arrows o'er his arm  
In merry mood he slung ;  
And as he went, old Ribbesford's woods  
With his blithe carols rung,  
That joyful morn.

As jocund thus he passed along  
The meads of Severn side,  
A fallow doe both large and strong,  
Stood drinking from its tide ;

Young Robin stretched his bowstring tight,  
And with unerring aim  
Forth sprang his arrow quick as light,  
And down the fallow came,  
With groans that morn.

Just as he pull'd his well-tried bow,  
And as his arrow flew,  
Up leap'd a salmon,—thus the doe  
And salmon both he slew ;  
With haste into the rapid stream  
His manly form he cast,  
And gladly to the river side  
The salmon drew at last,  
That famous morn.

And when he op'd the silvery prize,  
An unexpected sight  
Arrested his astonished eyes  
And filled him with delight ;  
For lo ! the ring, Honora's ring,  
That left him nought to wish,  
He found embedded fast within  
The stomach of the fish,  
That joyful morn !

Then eagerly to Tunhill's hall,  
Like swiftest bird he flew,  
And cried, " I have obeyed her thrall—  
Her hand to me is due ;  
Here, here's the ring, Honora's own !  
And here is one that feels  
As true a love as e'er was known,  
As pure as heart reveals,  
Beneath Heaven's light."

Old Tunhill's halls rung with delight,  
And many merry souls  
Met once again, Oh ! happy night,  
To drain young Robin's bowls ;  
For fair Honora had that day  
Become his happy bride,  
And many friends, both grave and gay,  
Look'd on the scene with pride,  
That famous night.

After sauntering leasurably about the churchyard I passed over a stile at the west side of it, into a field, and sat down on a seat that some kind individual had placed underneath an immense tree. Here there was a splendid birds-eye view of the Church and Ribbesford House, as the field, as well as the churchyard on that side rose very abruptly. "Gray's Elegy" was perfectly illustrated by the whole scene. There were the graves of the rude forefathers, the rugged elms, the yew trees, and the ivy-mantled tower; and doubtless there were in those graves some hearts once pregnant with "celestial fire," some hands that "the rod of empire might have swayed," and some village Hampden and Cromwell side by side.

It will be in place here to give a short account of Ribbesford (pronounced Ribsford), and formerly spelled Ribe-ford.

There were two Ribbesfords or Manors, belonging to the great manor of Chiderminster, and in the same shire with it, and it is probable on the same side of the River; and there was also a Ribe-ford on the opposite side which was part of the Barony of Mortimer, and is now the Lordship of Ribbesford. Thus it seems there was a communication of the same names to places on each side of the River, and though I cannot point out the situation of Ribe-ford and the Ribeford on the Kidderminster side, yet the termination of their names bespeaks their nearness to the river, and I think we may venture to conclude that they were opposite, or nearly so, to the present Ribbesford; and likewise that the Shropshire Wribe-Hall was not far above or below the present Wribbenhall, and was what is now the Manor of Bewdley, or included in it. The Vill of Ribe-ford belonged in Saxon times to the Monastery of Worcester, and is presumed to have been presented to that establishment by some devout Saxon; it belonged to the Cellarer of Worcester Monastery, and was bound to supply wood for its use. The present Parish Church stands a mile below Bewdley, the latter being a more modern town. After the Norman Conquest, Wribe-Hall being presented to Ralph de Mortimer, the most noted of all the 260 knights who attended William of Normandy in his Conquest, it was called Gurbe-hall,

as the Normans always changed the W in Gu, as Gulielmus for Wilielmus, Gualterus for Walterus, &c. In many cases the Normans paid no regard to prior rights, but in the case of the Mortimers it was not so, as we find them acknowledging the dues formerly paid to the Priory of Worcester, thus "By an Inquisition held at Worcester, May 7th, 1337, before Robert de Longdon, deputy of William Trassell, the King's Escheator for England, on this side of the Trent, it was found that the Manor of Bewdley was held of the Priory of Worcester, by the yearly-rent of 20 shillings, which had been paid by Roger de Mortimer the Elder, Edmund his Son, Roger the Son of Edmund Mortimer, and Edmund Son of Roger and Matilda his wife, who were Lords of Beaudley, and paid the rent before mentioned." Bewdley was extra parochial until Henry the Sixth's time, when it was united for Ecclesiastical purposes to Ribbesford. Bewdley being a place of Sanctuary, caused it to become populous, and the Refugees not daring to go out of the Town, caused a Chapel to be built in it, which they endowed liberally, but Leland in his Itinerary (1538), says "it now is abrogated."

On one of my visits, the butler at Ribbesford House, seeing me standing near the oak in front of the mansion, came forward and told me that the oak had been measured recently, and was found to be 33 feet thick at the height of 5 feet from the ground. He invited me to see the mansion and to walk round the garden. On entering the former by the side door, I espied over it, in a good state of preservation, the arms of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who lived there at the beginning of the 17th century.

He has left us a record of his own doings, written in the quaint language of his age, and exhibiting a rare mixture of modesty, knowledge, enterprise, and egotism. It was edited by the famous Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, and printed by Dodsley of Pall Mall, 1770; Walpole dedicated it to the "Most Noble Henry Arthur Herbert, Earl of Powis, Viscount Ludlow, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Baron Powis and Ludlow, and Treasurer of His Majesty's Household," who it seems intrusted the manuscript to Walpole's supervision before going to press.

In his short but pithy dedication, he says "men of the proudest blood should not blush to distinguish themselves in letters as well as arms, when they learn what excellence Lord Herbert attained in both." In proof of this it seems that his lordship had written many speculative works, and a book upon the reign of Henry VIII.

His own life was written when he was upwards of sixty years of age, from which the following extracts will sufficiently show the man.

His father was Richard Herbert, Esq., son of Edward Herbert, Esq., and grandchild to Sir Richard Herbert, Knt., who was a younger son of Sir Richard Herbert, of Colebroke, in Monmouthshire. His father it seems was black-haired and bearded, with stern yet handsome features, and very courageous. He filled the offices of Deputy-Lieutenant, Justice of the Peace, and Custos Rotulorum, with such impartiality that even his enemies always appealed to him for justice.

His grandfather lived in Montgomery Castle; appeared whilst young at Court; then served in the wars in France and in the North, and also in the rebellions during the reign of Edward VI. and Queen Mary. When at home he devoted his time to the suppression of the Outlaws who abounded at that period; was very hospitable, having a long table covered *twice every meal* with the best of meats.

Our author's father's brother (Charles) had a son who became the King's Attorney-General; on these and various other accounts the family became very rich, and Lord Edward, fearing that his ancestors might have reaped some of their gains unfairly, offered publicly, at several periods, by proclamation through his bailiff, "that if any lands were gotten by evil means, or so much as hardly, they should be compounded for or restored again, but to this day never any man yet complained to me in this kind."

His great grandfather was steward in the time of Henry VIII. of the lordships and marches of North Wales, East Wales, and Cardiganshire, with power to execute offenders, which he used moderately, as may be found in the public records kept in the

Paper Chamber at Whitehall. He was buried in Montgomery, and a monument was erected in the chancel to his memory.

Sir Richard Herbert, of Colebrook, was that proud and undaunted hero who twice passed through a great army of Northern men, *alone*, with a poll-axe in his hand, without hurt, more famed thereby than Amadis de Gaul, or the Knight of the Sun. He and his brother, the unfortunate Earl of Pembroke, were employed in the ninth year of Edward IV., to reduce the rebels in North Wales, who were partizans of Henry VI. The most resolute rebel held Harlech Castle, in Merionethshire. He surrendered on condition that Edward IV. should spare his life. The king refused to ratify this compact; thereupon Sir Richard requested that the rebel should be put into his castle again, and for some one else to fetch him out, or else he would lay down his life for the captain's, so the king being hard pressed, gave him the captain's life. This is another trait of these two brothers. They had apprehended seven brethren in Anglesea, lawless characters, who were all ordered by the Earl to be hanged. The mother of them begged on her knees that two or even one of them should be spared, which the Earl refused, thereupon she cursed the Earl on her knees, and wished that God's mischief might happen to him in his first battle. This curse remained upon his brother, Sir Richard's mind, and in the next battle he forewarned the Earl of the woman's curse. In this battle (fought at Danesmoore, Northamptonshire) they were both taken and executed, together with Earl Rivers, father of the queen, by command of George, Duke of Clarence, and the Earl of Warwick, who had revolted from Edward. This Earl's (Pembroke's) younger son had a daughter who married the Earl of Worcester's eldest son, and Lord Herbert of Cherbury married a descendant of this family, thereby uniting the families of the two brothers who fought and died together.

On the maternal side, our author was also highly connected. His mother was daughter of Sir Richard Newport, whose wife was heiress of Sir Thomas Bromley (of Worcestershire) Privy Councillor and Executor of Henry VIII. Of his own brothers and

sisters he states, that his brother Richard was a warrior, and was buried at Bergen-op-zoom, being wounded twenty-four times; his brother William was a warrior also, but died young; his brother Charles was Fellow of New College, Oxford, and also died young; his brother George was public orator at Cambridge, he had studied with a view of being made Secretary of State, but being disappointed, took orders, became Rector of Bemerton and a Prebendary of Lincoln, and wrote two poems, the "Temple," in 1635, and the "Priest to the Temple," in 1652. Lord Bacon dedicated to him his translation of some Psalms into English verse. His brother Henry was made Gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber, and Master of the Revels; his brother Thomas (a posthumous child) was a seaman, and made himself conspicuous on many occasions; but not being much promoted, he retired into private life, and lived in a very sullen and melancholy manner for years.

Of his three sisters he states nothing very particular, but that they all married into families of distinction.

But of himself; he was born at Eyton in Shropshire, was afflicted for many years in the head, which cast a dumbness upon him, and when he spoke, one of his first questions was, "how came he into this world." He was taught the alphabet at seven years of age, with grammar, &c., and so quickly did he learn, that he soon was able to make an oration, and fifty or sixty verses per diem, in Latin; at nine, he was taught Welch; at ten, he acquired the Greek tongue and Logic; and at twelve was sent to University College, Oxford; after being there a few months his father died. At the age of fifteen, Sir William Herbert, of St. Gillian's, having died and left his property to his daughter Mary, on condition that she should marry a Herbert, he was married to her (she being 21) by the Vicar of Wroxeter, who had married his own father and mother, and christened him. He then took his wife and mother to Oxford, and resumed his studies for three years, after which he lived mostly in London, until twenty-one. During the first six years of his married life he learned the French, Italian, and Spanish languages, and to keep himself from com-

pany, he learned music, as an amusement; he also studied physic with such success as to cure many persons who had been pronounced incurable, and finally, made himself a finished horseman.

In 1600, he attended out of curiosity at Court, where, being, as was usual, upon his knees, on the Queen's passing, she noticed him, and, with her usual oath, asked who he was; upon being told, she pitied him for having married so young, and gave him her hand to kiss twice. From that time nothing happened until King James's accession, as he had given himself to study, stating, "the more I learnt out of my book, I felt still a desire to know more." He went to meet King James on his coming to London, and was soon after created Knight of the Bath, upon which occasion the Earl of Shrewsbury put his spur on; he was then made Sheriff of Montgomeryshire, and appointed his Deputies without receiving the usual fees. Upon his first departure from England, he obtained, as required, a license; his first visit was to the English Ambassador, in Paris, through whom he became acquainted with Montmorency, High Constable of France, who was very fond of him, and in his absence, left him in charge of all his Estates and Castle at Melun. Upon his departure, the Duke gave him a genet, value 500 crowns, as a mark of esteem. He then went to Paris and studied under the famous Isaac Casaubon, attending at the same time regularly at Court, where the Queen of Henry IV. of France, made a great favorite of him. In the following year he returned to England, bearing with him a present of a scarf from the Princess of Condé to Queen Anne of Denmark, but was shipwrecked, and all but lost. After his return Lord Herbert again retired to his studies in the country.

Soon after this, he again left England for the Wars in the Low Countries, under Sir Edward Cecil, and being challenged by Balagny, one of the French, to do as he did, they both leaped over the trenches at the Siege of Juliers, and ran unhurt to and fro, although from 300 to 400 shot were fired at them. In the course of this campaign, from some personal matter, he was attacked by Sir Thomas Somerset (third son of the Earl of Worcester) and eleven or twelve men, the whole of whom he beat



and made them take to their tents. He thence returned, *via* Antwerp and Calais, to London. Soon after his return he was attacked (from unfounded jealousy) by Sir John Ayres and his men, in Scotland Yard, in which they both nearly lost their lives, but Lord Herbert remained on the ground after Sir John Ayres and his bullies were taken off.

In 1614, he again departed to the wars. He then travelled to Venice, thence to Florence, where he saw in the Chapel of the House of Medici, a nail, one end of which was iron and the other gold, made so by virtue of a tincture into which it was put! Thence to Sienna, and before Christmas he reached Rome. Here he was accused by the Inquisition, and, but for great vigilance, would have been seized. From thence he went to Padua, in which University he spent some time, and then departed to Venice, Milan, and Savoy. The Duke of Savoy, he states, was very rapacious, and upon asking some of his subjects how they could bear his taxations, they replied, "we are not so offended at what he takes, as thankful for what he leaves." It seems this Duke when short of cash scoured the country, and when Lord Herbert and Count Scarnafigi, being hungry, called at an inn for relief, they found the Duke's soldiers had just carried everything off, and the woman offered them the only thing left her, the milk from her breasts, in a wooden dish; this was refused, and Lord Herbert gave her a pistole, value 14s.

In this journey he offended by his terse answers the Governor of Lyons, who imprisoned him. Sir Edward Sackville happening to be in the town, sent to see who the prisoner was, and, upon seeing the Governor, and telling him who he was, he (the Governor) ordered Lord Herbert to be liberated, but he would not leave the prison unless the Governor came in person, who, with his lady, came and set him free. Not satisfied, Lord Herbert sent him a challenge, but the young Duke de Montmorency interfered and made them friends.

From thence he travelled to Ostend, where, at an inn, he heard some foreigners speak reproachfully of his King. He challenged to fight them there and then, when they acknowledged their fault

and, at last, drank King James's health ; he then returned home and suffered three years illness, the most favorable parts of which he spent in study. At the end of this sickness he was chosen, out of eighteen fit persons, to act as Ambassador to France. Soon after his appointment, his house was broken open for the express purpose of robbing him of his official funds, £600 or £700, but he arose and in his shirt alone, attacked the thieves, and drove them (ten or twelve) away.

On the day of his departure, Queen Anne was buried ; he arrived in Paris on the Saturday night, when the Spanish Ambassador requested an audience from him, on the Sunday morning, which he refused to give, as it was the Sabbath. He soon had an audience of the King (Louis XIII) and Queen. The former he says was so extreme a stutterer, that his tongue protruded from his mouth some time before he could speak one word ; he had a double row of teeth, never expectorated nor perspired, but was very fond of exercise, indeed, so active that he out-tired all his attendants, and was considered insensible either to heat or cold. During his stay at Paris, the plague was raging, and he retired to Melun, where he had before resided. On his return, the Spanish Ambassador was in his carriage on the road before him, and Lord Herbert determined to pass him, which the Spaniard observed, and alighting, desired his company, and after salutations turned aside, on foot, to let the other pass, but Lord Herbert would not do so, whilst the Spaniard was *à pied*, but waited his entering his carriage, and drove past him. He ridicules the Spaniards for what he calls their Pundonores, and tells of Philip II. of Spain, upbraiding his Ambassador for neglecting an important affair for a ceremony, upon which the Ambassador replied, "Your Majesty's self is but a ceremony."

He tells us that after he had the quartan ague, he was more than one inch taller, that he was lighter in body than men who were shorter and slenderer, that he had a pulse at the top of his head, that he scarce ever felt cold in his life, and that his inner garments were as sweet after being worn, as before.

The Prince of Condé once finding fault with the King of England

for cursing, Lord Herbert replied that it was a trait of his gentleness, and upon the Prince demanding how cursing could be called gentleness, he replied that though the King could punish men himself, he only cursed them and left it to God to punish them. At this period, the Protestants were persecuted in France, and he was required, by despatches from England, to mediate for them. This was rejected by the French Minister, De Luynes, and led to a very angry altercation, and finally to confirmed animosity on the part of the latter. This animosity ended in De Luynes causing Lord Herbert to be recalled, but De Luynes dying shortly after, he was again sent to France to act for England, on his own opinions and experience.

Soon after his reinstatement, the Prince of Wales passed hastily through France on his way to marry the sister of the King of Spain, the which so affronted Lord Herbert (as he conceived he ought to have seen him) that he sent him word to that effect, to which the Prince sent an apologetic letter, and signed it—"Your Friend Charles."

At this period the French King's Confessor, Père Segneraud, preached a violent sermon against the Protestants, which so incensed Lord Herbert that he complained to the Queen. This got to the Confessor's ears, and he sent word to his lordship that he would hinder his fortune in the world, wheresoever he might be, to which he replied, by Mons. Guallac, "that nothing in all France but a Fryar or a woman durst have sent him such a message."

During the heat of so many undertakings, he was composing a work, styled "*De veritate prout distinguitur à Revelatione verisimili, possibili et à falso.*" When finished, he submitted it to Hugo Grotius and Tieleners, who both advised him to publish it; he yet hesitated, after being so advised, but one day he took the book into his own hands, and kneeling down in his chamber, said, "O thou Eternal God, Author of the light which now shines upon me, and Giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech thee of thine infinite goodness to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make: I am not satisfied enough whether

I shall publish this book, *De Veritate*; if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee give some sign from Heaven, if not, I shall suppress it." As soon as the prayer was ended, an indescribable noise followed, and his feelings were so cheered and comforted that the book was thereupon printed, and this, he adds, although strange, "I protest, before the Eternal God, is true."

It being found necessary to send the Earls of Holland and Carlisle to Paris to negotiate the marriage of James the First's eldest son (Charles) with Henrietta Maria, sister of Lewis XIII., King of France, Lord Herbert was recalled; and here ends his life.

With regard to the Herberts more immediately connected with Ribbesford, we find that in 1639, Henry Herbert, Esq., was M.P. for Bewdley; in 1640, Sir Henry Herbert, Knt., filled the same office; in 1661, Sir Henry Herbert was returned, and on his demise, in 1673, when W. J. Foley, Esq. was returned, Henry Herbert, Esq., petitioned against him, and unseated him; and in 1708, the Hon. Henry Herbert was returned; these being descendants of the same family as the renowned Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and also the regenerators and beautifiers of the scene, will, I trust, be a sufficient apology for my introducing so long a notice of that singular and excellent individual.

As I walked home, I halted at a stile commanding a view of the three noble avenues, and of the orchard which he had planted with such care, (the former representing the main body and wings of an army, and the latter the camp still known by that name). These have always been open, and I could not help regretting that so few of those who daily enjoyed them, as public walks of rare beauty, knew so little of him that had planted them. Therefore I introduced his characteristics in my Poem of Ribbesford, as follows, not only as an humble tribute to his worth, but to inform my neighbours of a great man of ancient days, who was but little known to any of them. This I do not say egotistically, because his "Life" was very scarce, in fact, there was but one copy of it in Bewdley:—

Would that my pen the hidden past could shew,  
And bring old epochs and their sons to light,

Would that my page could like the landscape glow  
With history's fadeless flow'rs all pure and bright ;  
Then like Sir Herbert, that undaunted knight,  
They'd live again, and living never die ;—  
Like the bright sun that never sees the night,  
But gladdens all that lives in earth and sky,  
The life of nature's frame, the joy of every eye.

In him pure virtue found a trusty son,—  
In him stern martial prowess had an heir,—  
In him those gen'rous qualities were spun  
Which make true hearts another's sorrows share,  
And brother like, a brother's errors spare ;  
In him the hopes that sprung in early days,  
In manhood's prime produced a wreath most fair  
Of blooming flowers, that time nor change decays,  
But lives in history's page, blazon'd with truth's bright rays.

See him in youth, in learning more than man,  
See him in manhood, fearless in his deeds,  
See him in battle,—foremost of the van,  
See him a friend, when help the needy needs,  
Ador'd and sought by men of various creeds ;  
See him at home, where love is purely won,  
The leader, who, by being led, still leads ;  
Physician, Statesman, Author, Valour's son,  
Alike in ev'ry sphere, in all supreme he shone.

Supreme in all !—Yes, yes, in all he rose  
Above the fearless, learned, virtuous, wise,  
Whether in battle 'gainst his country's foes,  
Or in the Council his proud voice would rise,  
And England's sons, for England's weal advise ;  
Or when in learning's ranks we find him placed,  
With truth's bright shield, before the nation's eyes,  
Giving the public mind a nobler taste,  
Shewing by falsehood's arts a land is most disgraced.

And when the world in all its various hues,  
In all its changing aspects he had tried,  
When Love, Fame, Honor, Fortune, and the Muse,  
Had by their gifts made him his country's pride.

And the mere man was almost deified;  
 Then tired of all, he left the noisy scene,  
 With books and pen life's remnant to divide,  
 Leaving a record of whate'er he'd seen,  
 In self-correcting terms, devoid of pride or spleen.

And oft to lighten his declining years  
 And grace his path as 'twere with fragrant flowers,  
 He seized his harp, like Albion's ancient seers,  
 And with sweet music soothed his latest hours,  
 Aided by poetry's persuasive powers;  
 Nor foreign joys nor scenes dwelt on his lips,  
 But home, sweet home and her delightful bowers,  
 Glow'd in his song, just like the sun that tips  
 The sea with golden beams when 'neath its waves he dips.

The sight on a Sunday morning of the townspeople coming up the avenues on leaving church, was very pleasing. I used to get in advance, and look down the central avenue (which is rather steep), at the approaching church-goers. There were the sober dressed old men and women, the gay youths and maidens, and the happy groups of children, all mixed together, and as they diverged at the junction of the avenues, as fancy led them, no prettier scene could to my mind's-eye be found on a Sabbath noontide in England.

When the congregation had disappeared from my sight, on their various homeward-bound paths, I returned to the churchyard to review the gravestones. I was as fond of this pursuit in my humble way, as "Old Mortality" was in his more extended researches, and at Ribbesford I found some curiosities.

At the head of a Bargeman's grave, there was the following record: "John Oakes, son of the above Mary, *lost his life* on the 23rd of December, 1821, aged 27.

Boreas' blast and Neptune's wave  
 Have tost me to and fro:  
 I strove all I could my life to save,  
 At last obliged to go;  
 Now at an anchor here I lay,  
 Where's many of the fleet,  
 But now once more I must set sail,  
 My Saviour, Christ, to meet."

And on another Severn-sailor's gravestone is—

My anchor's cast,  
My rope's ashore,  
And here I lie  
Till time's no more!

On another gravestone in remembrance of Mary Court there is a strange compound epitaph. Her husband sent to the gravestone letter-cutter for a book of epitaphs, that he might choose one for his wife; he could not please himself with any one whole verse in the book, but gratified his singular taste by putting two lines each, from two different verses together, and making one verse of them; Thus:

A sudden change, alas! to you I tell,  
My time was short to bid my friends farewell:  
No doctor's skill, nor friends' good will,  
On earth my life could save.

Near the wooden porch mentioned before, are some yew trees of great age, and under one of these is a gravestone with not a word upon it, perhaps a satire upon the various encomiums on the surrounding stones.

On the south side of the church is one bearing the following inscription:—"Here lieth the body of John Sheriffe, who left a part of Astley Wood to the Borough of Bewdley, for putting out of apprentices, yearly. He departed this life March 28th, 1702, aged 58." This money was regularly paid into the churchwardens' hands, who gave small sums of it with poor persons' sons, when apprenticed. It did not signify where the master resided, but the children were always selected from parishioners' sons.

Altogether the tomb and gravestones around recalled to my mind the words of Mrs. Acton Tindal,—

"Around the tombs of many an age and state,  
O'er gaudy blazonry carved cherubs weep;  
Languages, dead and living, celebrate  
Virtue and races wrapped in death's dull sleep."

After wandering about to my heart's content, I returned to the

north porch, where I sat myself down on one of the seats placed under its shelter, and being in the mood, penned the following lines :—

I love these churchyard wanderings,—here I sit  
And read the silent lessons round me spread ;  
A churchyard is a map or chart most fit  
Whereby the living trav'ller may be led,  
If that the living would but heed the dead ;  
Nor do they speak in that offensive tone  
That comes from living lips. The silent dread  
That springs within us when we sit alone,  
Musing on friends long dead, comes from a spotless throne.

That throne the mind, its occupant the just,  
Unyielding conscience, that keeps watch o'er all  
Our deeds and thoughts—nor fails it in its trust,  
E'en in those points that mannerists fain call  
The peccadilloes of poor fashion's thrall.  
The grave no fashion, pedigree nor blood,  
Acknowledges—before its terrors fall  
Alike the high, the low, the bad, the good,  
O'erwhelming rich and poor in its relentless flood.

The proof is here,—see where, commixed, repose  
The motley family of bye-gone years.  
Lo ! here the bargeman his last anchor throws,  
Rude storms and tempests he no longer fears,  
Nor thoughts of home now fill his eyes with tears ;  
His love for Severn, which in life he show'd,  
Is gratified in death, for in his ears  
(If death has ears) the stream whereon he rode  
Murmurs its rippling music to the buried crowd.

And o'er his grave an unadorned rhyme,  
Penn'd by affection's hand, attests his worth ;  
True, he ne'er slew his thousands at a time,  
Nor wrote his name in blood upon the earth,  
Nor riches heaped, nor vaunted noble birth ;  
And though the opulent may pass his grave,  
And make his epitaph a source of mirth,  
Still he has left, to mourn him, hearts as brave  
As e'er in battle stood, or crossed the stormy wave.



Here too, lies Sherriffe, he whose lib'ral hand  
Still blesses many when they need it most.  
The poor he knew would ne'er cease from the land,  
And few would make their care their only boast,  
For poverty frights many like a ghost.  
Utility his object, not to build  
A fane whose name should reach from coast to coast,  
Nor leave to royalty his fame to gild,  
His mouldy ill-got gains, such fruits do riches yield!



## CHAPTER X.

"Even Satan himself is far from excelling in knowledge—he may be cunning and insidious, but he certainly is not *wise* and *prudent*. We in general give this fallen spirit credit for much more wisdom than he possesses."

*Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary on 1. Samuel, chap. 28.*

At this period I began to attend the corn-market at Cleobury-Mortimer, which was held every Wednesday. The custom was for the millers, farmers and dealers to meet at seven o'clock in the evening, at the Talbot, and the King's Arms Inns. Each house had its regular frequenters of the two former classes, so that the dealers in corn had to divide their time in attending to both; thus the hour of returning home was so late, that, although it deterred many from attending, and kept the market in few hands, yet it was intolerable to all; especially in the winter season.

Behind the church (which is in the centre of the town), about a field's length, there was a free school, which was founded in the year 1720, by Sir William Lacon Childe, whose descendants have lived for generations at Kinlet Hall, about half way between Cleobury and Bridgenorth. This I had plenty of time to visit. The income was handsome—fully £500 per annum gross—about £300 of which was devoted to education, books, &c., and a fluctuating sum for clothing, apprenticeship fees, and minor expenses. The remainder was allowed to accumulate as a building fund, to be used in the erection of new schools.

This was a thoroughly free school, no fees being demanded, except from non-parishioners, and those were only 2d. per head per week. There were about 100 boys and 80 girls in the

whole, and 6 teachers. The boys were taught what their parents wished them to learn, and the educational course comprised Latin, French, Euclid, algebra, mensuration, book-keeping, chemistry, the natural sciences, and the elementary branches of instruction. Twelve boys and twelve girls were clothed at the cost of the foundation.

The head master (the Rev. Henry Kemp), threw his whole energies into his task, and encouraged every boy according to his abilities, and not according to the position in life, of his parents. There were the children of tradespeople, farmers, artisans, and day labourers, all in the same classes, and I can safely say that I never visited so useful a school before nor since.

The population of the town was about 1500, so that the attendance of the children, as stated above, was very large, and must have been (and still is) of great advantage to the inhabitants. The whole of the success was owing to the trustees, of whom there were ten, acknowledging and supporting the head-master in his enlightened views and patriotic conduct.

In May 1864, I wrote to the Head Master as to the progress of the school, and I hope it may not be considered out of place to give his answer here.

Cleobury-Mortimer, May 6th, 1864.

DEAR SIR,

I have pleasure in returning you the statistics you request. You will understand my delicacy, in not giving the names of the Trustees, or the net as distinguished from the gross income.

But there is no reason, so far as the public are concerned, for reserve on either point. Everything connected with this Charity is above-board and straightforward. Only I should not like individuals' names, or what I know in my official capacity, to be published through me.

Believe me to remain,

Yours very faithfully,

HENRY KEMP.

1.—Number of Scholars (average) 90 Boys, 65 Girls, 16 Infants; the Infants will no doubt be increased to 35 directly the new building is opened.

2.—The education is quite free to legal parishioners. Those resident, but not legally settled, pay the nominal fee to the School Funds of 2d. per week; or any after the first, from the same family, 1d. per week. It is

in contemplation to abolish even these fees from all who have been three years in the parish.

3.—No payment required for books, &c., from any scholars.

4.—Salaries £150, £55, £50.

5.—Assistant Teachers, £10. The stipends to the Mistresses of the Girls and the Infants Schools will be considerably increased after the opening of the new buildings.

6.—Gross Annual Income about £500.

7.—New Schools will cost including fittings, boundary walls, &c., about £1,900.

8.—This money, is the result of accumulated surplusses.

9.—The course of education is English in its most liberal interpretation, including Algebra, Book-keeping, Drawing, Music, &c., &c.

10.—Any applicants for apprenticeship, if duly qualified, are put out; but of late years there have been few applicants.

11.—The School Property consists of a farm and money in the Funds.

12.—Twelve of each sex are clothed.

The whole history of this school shewed a sincere desire on the part of the resident Trustee, and the Masters, to do their duty. Such a school was a great credit to them, individually and collectively, but especially to the descendants of the Founder, who have always fulfilled his orders with care, to the great benefit of the parishioners, to say nothing of allowing the residents in the surrounding districts, to participate in the benefits of the school, for a trifling charge.

The new schools were built at the rear of the old schools, and opened before the expiration of the year in which the above letter was written; the total cost was about £1,500.

At the present date (1870) the staff of teachers is as follows:—

One Head Master, Mr. W. H. Wilson.

One Assistant Master.

One Mistress and Assistant for the Girls' School.

One Mistress and Assistant for the Infants' School.

The late Master, the Rev. H. Kemp, is now vicar of Kyre, near Tenbury.

The schools are conducted on the old principles and the Trustees are as follows :—

W. L. CHILDE, Esq., Kinlet Hall.

The REV. E. G. CHILDE, Cleobury.

SIR T. E. WINNINGTON, Bart., Stanford Court, between  
Witley and Worcester.

C. WICKSTED, Esq, Shakenhurst, near Tenbury.

The REV. J. WALCOT, Bewdley.

SLADE BAKER, Esq., Sandbourne, near Bewdley.

— PARDOE, Esq, Nash Court, near Tenbury.

The REV. — MURRAY, Bromsgrove.

This list shews that there is only one resident Trustee, and to him therefore the real guardianship of this truly useful school belongs. In proof of this, the above list is sufficient. Of course the Founder's lineal successor, whose name appears first, is entitled to be a trustee, live where he may; but why the other six non-resident gentlemen should be appointed, whilst there are plenty of respectable residents in the town, fit to fill the office, is inexplicable.

Should the Rev. E. G. Childe leave Cleobury, his successor might not have the interests of the school at heart, and in that case, the non-residence of the other six trustees, would be of serious consequence. The way to cure this would be to appoint a resident in the case of every succeeding vacancy in the trusteeships, so that in time there would be no non-resident Trustees on the Board.

There was another school in the town, called Fox's, with but a very small endowment, which has since been incorporated with the Free School.

I used to go to Cleobury on horseback, and generally left home soon after dinner, so that I might call at some of the intermediate villages to get orders. On some of these journeys I passed through the parish of Rock, and stopped at the village of the same name. Its original name was Ac, which was the Saxon name of the Oak, for the growth of which this place was and is



### BEWDLEY NEW BRIDGE AND PART OF WRIBBENHALL.

The tall house on the right hand side, nearest to the Bridge, was my residence before removing to Wribbenthal; the round house, on the Wribbenthal end of the bridge, was formerly the turnpike house; and the large house, beyond the railway, on the hill, is the country residence of Mr. Sturge.

During the three years I lived at Wribbenhall (1845-6-7) political, religious, and commercial excitements prevailed. There were also two national scourges felt throughout the length and breadth of the land,—the potatoe disease, and the cholera,—and to add to these evils, enormous speculations in railway shares and in grain came in their wake. The “railway fever” spread everywhere; schemes being issued, which filled the advertising columns of every newspaper, many of which were mere shams, and principally got up by combinations of attorneys and surveyors to fill their own pockets. ✓

Shares were issued to thousands and tens of thousands of eager purchasers, and were resold at high premiums, in most cases even before any Act was obtained. The man that had original shares allotted to him was considered very lucky, and after he received the “Scrip,” he had a host of buyers ready to give almost any premium he asked for the much coveted bits of paper.

The “wheat fever” which sprung into life from the loss of the potato crop followed. It went on until the disease became an insanity. Every person in the corn trade was mad in purchasing: the importers scoured the world, and American and Russian wheats, American and Danubian Indian Corn, American Haricot Beans for table use, Turkish Barley, Russian Rye Flour in bales, French wheats and flour, and Spanish Flour were poured into the United Kingdom in profuse quantities.

The Corn Laws and the Navigation Laws were suspended on purpose to encourage a supply from all quarters, in consequence of which almost all the shipping trade was employed to bring grain to our shores, at rates of freight immoderately high.

The Income Tax had been re-imposed in 1842, to meet the deficiency of the revenue caused by an amended tariff, and Sir Robert Peel became so unpopular on account of his Free Trade proclivities, that he resigned in December 1845. Lord John Russell was called to the helm of affairs, but did not succeed in forming a Government, and then Sir Robert Peel returned to office in triumph, for the purpose of carrying free trade in corn. His first proposition to reduce the duties on corn so that they

should diminish to 1s. per quarter in 1849, was ordered to go into committee by a majority of 337 to 240 after twelve nights debate.

The decimation of the people of Ireland by the potato disease was unparalleled. They had for a length of time depended upon the potato crop, and when this failed, the effects were deplorable. The bad laws passed in favour of the non-resident landlord system, and the Tithe Laws passed in favour of the Protestant Church, shewed their direful effects when this calamity fell upon Ireland. The revenues derived by these two unnatural and unpatriotic classes, had for generation after generation been spent in other lands, and when this great evil arose, those who had sucked the benefits of the produce of Ireland were absent, and cared nothing for the victims. But the great mass of the English people,—those who had no part of the revenues, wrung so long from the tillers of Irish soil,—came forward nobly with subscriptions, to aid the dying thousands of pauperized Ireland.

In May 1847, the average price of wheat in England exceeded £5 for every eight imperial bushels; and in many cases, in remote districts, it rose as high as fourteen or fifteen shillings per bushel.

As for myself, I was as mad as the rest. I bought large quantities of American flour at Liverpool, which I sold at home, and which at one period reached so high a price as 16s. 6d. per bushel of 56lbs. I attended Gloucester Market every alternate Saturday to buy wheat and barley; some of which I resold in the same market, and on the same days that I made the purchases, at a good profit.

These journeys to Gloucester and back in a day were heavy work, but the large trade done at large profits, proved a very pleasant compensation for the toil and fatigue. I used to drive to the station beyond Droitwich, taking a man with me from the town, to return with the horse and gig, who also met me on my return the same night at the station, from whence I drove home.

There were many men ruined by the reverse of the markets when the fever abated; this to a great extent was caused by the delay at sea, from contrary winds, of the cargoes shipped from the Baltic and the Black Sea. These winds continued for many



weeks, and when the change took place the cargoes came in altogether, and so the markets became glutted.

Then came the panic; many parties sold their arrivals by auction at once, and some held on in hopes of a reaction, but the reaction never came, and thus between the fall in the price and the expenses of storage, the holders were nearly all ruined in the end.

Many curious reverses took place during this struggle. One was that of a young man named Green, who came to Gloucester from an inland town, during the height of the mania and took a house on the spot, in order to attend to his speculations. The profits were so large that he set up a hunting horse, which of course led him to purchase boots and spurs, and other field equipments. The first pair of top boots he bought pleased him so well, that he ordered the shoemaker to make him eleven more pairs, ten pairs of which were found untouched when, from the collapse of the markets, he afterwards became bankrupt.

The scenes on the corn markets during the rise in prices were very exciting; enormous quantities changed hands every hour, and every one was realising a profit in his turn. In the month of May 1847, wheat and other articles were at the highest point, but after that the markets went down fast, in some weeks as much as eight to ten shillings a quarter. Under this revulsion the real buyers for consumption (millers, dealers and bakers), who had not speculated, bought at almost any price they pleased, and so as the old proverb says, "What feeds one man, starves another."

During the period of the railway and grain speculations, other branches of commerce were in a very excited state. The trades in wool, sugar, leather, hops and other articles were involved in the general race of high profits, and like their forerunners came down with a dreadful crash. The amount of loss altogether was published in a book styled "Banks and Bankers," by Mr. Loyd Jones, now Lord Overstone, and he computed it to exceed that of the National Debt! Of course general distrust followed such a serious state of things, and it is questionable, whether the evils

then brought about, by rash speculations, and bubbles, have not, even up to the present moment, a bad effect on our general trade.

The abolition of the Corn Laws frightened the landowners and farmers to such an extent, that in many cases the farms had to be let by auction, from want of tenants. Many of the farmers who happened to be men of capital withdrew from their holdings, and in their place men who did not fear the effects of future importations, took the deserted farms on leases at very low rents.

The farmers did not perceive that free trade in grain, was more a landlord's question than a tenant's. Their anger was unbounded, to which they gave vent at the various markets in very uncivil language, heaping on the heads of the "Free Traders" the most opprobrious epithets.

Amongst the anti-free-trade farmers who attended Kidderminster Market was Mr. William Moule, of the Rye-Land Farm, in the parish of Elmley-Lovett; he was the fiercest of the fierce in his anathemas against the "Peelites" as the free-traders were called, and he made a vow that he would never have a horse shod so long as free trade in grain continued. This vow he faithfully kept, and his teams used to bring his loads of wheat and barley into Kidderminster with noiseless steps, up to the day of his death.

It appeared that the blacksmith he employed, was a free-trader, and therefore he was determined not to employ him any longer. He in fact would not buy anything whatever from any free-trader, and his favorite remark was, that those who supported free trade in grain, ought to go to live in foreign countries.

Had he been told that horse shoeing was not known by the ancients, any more than corn-duties were, he might have urged that both ought to co-exist or both be abolished, or he might have pointed even in his own day, to the larger part of the half-civilised or barbarian parts of the world, where the horse is used, and where not only our ordinary "shoe," but even any form of shoe, is unknown; in short he might have pointed with triumph in support of the non-shoeing of horses to the Old Testament, and to Grecian History, to the writings of Homer and Xenophon,

and the sculptures of the Parthenon, on the one hand, and on the other to the records of the Persians, Ethiopians, Tartars, and Mongols; or he might have come down to the present age in India, where horses are often shod on the fore feet alone. But he "cared for none of these things," he only knew that free trade was obnoxious to him, and, as he could not reach Sir Robert Peel, he visited his free trade sins on the village blacksmith.

My trade in East Worcestershire increased very rapidly; so that I resolved to remove to Kidderminster, and fix my residence there instead of at Wribbenhall. One of my reasons for this, was, first, that as I had to go two days every week to Kidderminster, I should, by residing there, save a good deal of time and do more business in that town; but the chief reason was that as the railway was being laid down I must in a short time remove there, whether I liked or not, so as to be ready to compete with distant dealers, who would come by rail to that town oftener, and more regularly, than they had hitherto done by coach. This change was not at all relished by me, but I was forced to submit.

I had a good offer made to me of a house, with yard, stabling, and a large malthouse, in Mill Street, which I took; but I resolved to hold possession of the warehouses in Wribbenhall, until the railway was opened, and to employ a person to superintend it in my absence.

I therefore made it known that I should sell my house and garden at Wribbenhall, for which I soon had a purchaser in the person of Mr. Puckey, a Supervisor of Excise.

This house was erected when the half-timbered style was prevalent, and had gables and an overhanging front. I used to occupy one of the front rooms, on the ground floor, as an office, and on account of supplying the Queen Dowager with corn, (as stated at page 134) I had a royal coat of arms carved and gilt in London, and placed in the front; and a sign-board the full length of the house, under it, with the words "Purveyor to Her Majesty the Queen Dowager," in large gold letters.

There were two front entrances, a private one in the centre,

and another at the river-end of the house, communicating with the garden and kitchen. The latter was generally thrown open, and being studded with square-headed iron nails, it agreed well with the appearance of the whole front. The house was often mistaken for an Inn, on account of the coat of arms and the sign board being so prominent. This was more particularly the case on Fair days, when countrymen would enter the large door, sit down in the kitchen, and call for ale and bread and cheese. Whenever it happened that I was at home on these occasions, I told the servant to obey orders, to see the effects the mistake would produce; and it was very amusing to witness their confusion, on being told that they were in a private house, and were heartily welcome to the refreshment.

I made all my arrangements before the end of 1847 to quit Wribbenhall, but before doing so I resolved to publish my production entitled the Devil's Spadeful, with illustrations.

It was customary at Bewdley when the bow-halliers were engaged to draw, or rather to pull, barges up the River Severn, to give each man two mugs of ale (twenty men at least being required for each barge), so as to bind the bargain for the voyage, as they called a journey to any town situated on the river in Shropshire.

There was one public house on the river side above the bridge, on the Quay, called the Mug House, where many of these bargains were made. Having often visited this house I found it much frequented by up-country barge owners, as the proprietors of these vessels were styled.

These owners at that time realized plenty of money, as there was no opposition to their trade from railways, and they spent it freely. It was at this house that I first heard of the tradition of the "Devil's Spittleful" or Spadeful. and finding on inquiry, that no account of it had ever been written and published, I resolved to try my hand at a narrative in verse, agreeing with the tradition.

If the reader has never seen the Devil's Spadeful, he may do so by proceeding from Bewdley for about a mile on the road to

Stourport, where, on turning up a lane to the left, he will soon come to a point where three lanes branch off in different directions. Keeping the one inclining to the extreme left, he will shortly see, in the centre of an extensive amphitheatre, a large mound of earth, composed of rock and sand, covered with firs, and completely perforated on all sides by rabbits. To give some idea of its size, the length over the top from base to base is 320 feet. This, then, is the identical Spadeful of earth, accounted for in the following Poem, and should any person possess doubts of the truth of the tradition, I trust he will study the point and tell us how it did come there.

When standing on the top of the Spadeful, the spectator may stretch his eye over a fine scene of hill, vale, rock, and river, and I thought that if a seat was placed here it would be a great convenience to the admirers of nature, especially if fixed in the large cavity in the west end of the Spadeful.

The only part of the Poem which does not truly belong to the native tradition, is that wherein I have made it appear the Spadeful was transported from Stromboli in Sicily. The idea was suggested by the circumstance of the gap which appears on the summit of that mountain, and which may be said to correspond with the size of the huge mound called the Spadeful.

It may be asked why the Three Parts of the Tradition were written in different metres: I answer that it was, and is still an opinion amongst poets, that the metre should suit the subject,—

“ Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,  
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.”

The public houses the “Hart and Dove” and the “Robin Hood,” mentioned in the First Part, flourished when the old bridge stood, but have since been converted into private dwellings.

With regard to Satan falling lame as stated in the Second Part, it may be doubted, as Burns (a great authority on that point), when addressing him, said—

“ And tho’ you lowin hough’s thy hame ; thou travels far  
And faith ! thou’rt neither lag nor lame, nor blate nor scaur.

## PART I.

SHOWING HOW THE FRIENDS OF BEWDLEY USED TO ENJOY  
THEMSELVES.

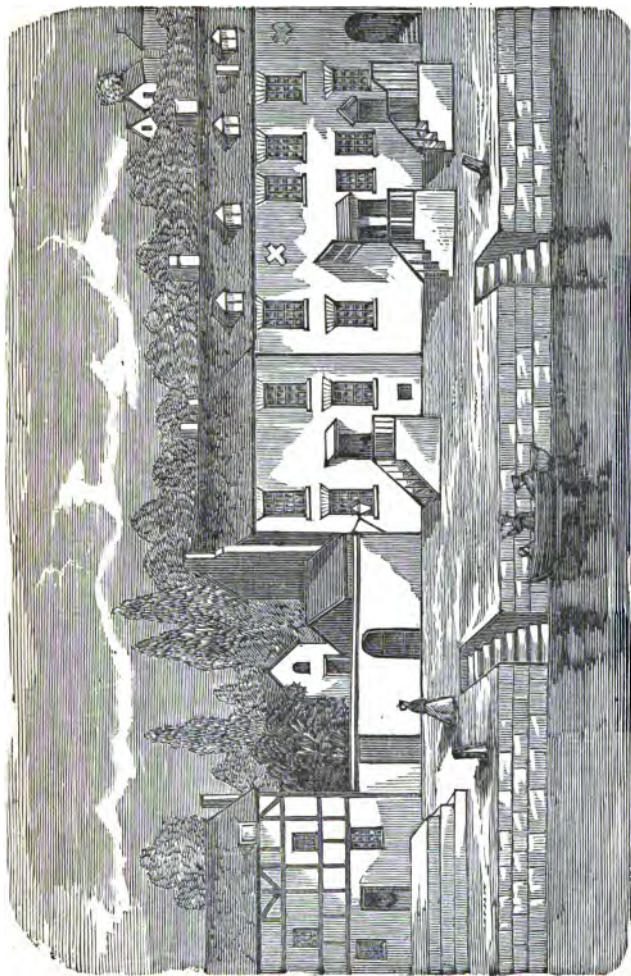
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" In different courses, different tempers run,  
Some hate the moon, some sicken at the sun ;  
Wound up at twelve at noon some clocks go right,  
Mine better goes wound up at twelve at night."

CHURCHILL.

---

In days of yore, those happy days,  
When Peace o'er England's isle presided.  
Before M'Adam pruned our *Ways*,  
Or steam six miles an hour derided—  
Long, long, before that watery class,  
Teetotallers, were ever known,  
When men in friendship drank their glass,  
And lov'd the church, and priz'd the throne.  
When daily toil was o'er they hied  
To have a cup of brave " Sir John ;"  
And thus the old " Mug House " fireside  
Was nightly circled by its throng—  
A merry, pleasure-loving set  
Of neighbours, kinsmen, and old folks,  
Who erst in Bewdley nightly met  
To quaff home-brew'd and crack their jokes.  
Mirth, jocund mirth, dwelt on each brow,  
The blazing fire shone in each face :  
Restriction's rules were banished now,  
No shrew's sharp tongue their ears menace ;  
Pure joy beamed in each well-pleas'd eye,  
Friendship presided o'er the board,  
And as the jokes went circling by,  
The Mistress smiled, the Landlord roar'd.  
Princes their palaces may own,  
Luxurious wealth may please the grand,

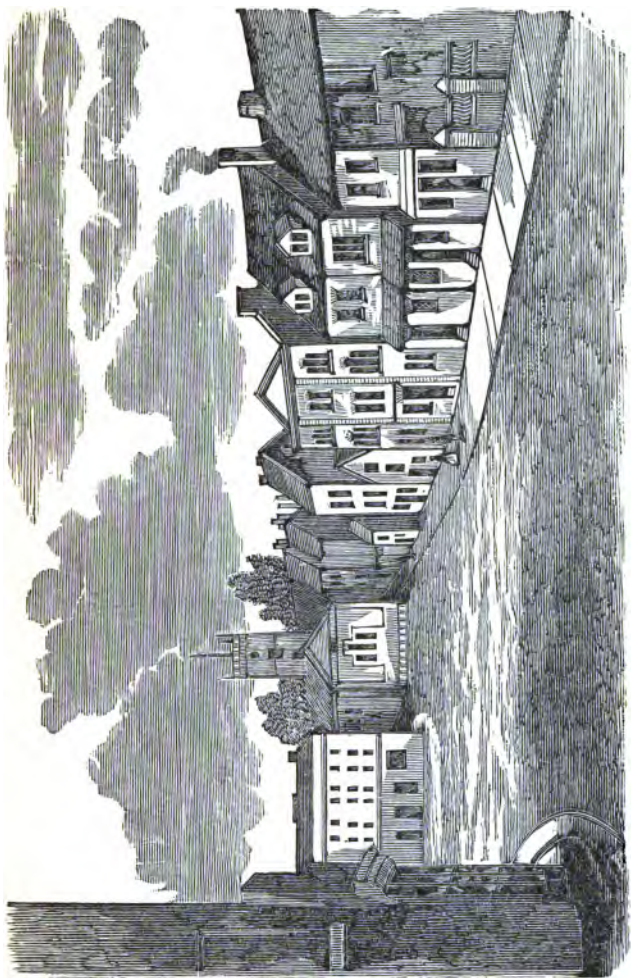


THE OLD MUG HOUSE, BEWDLEY.

“ When daily toil was o’er they hied  
To have a cup of brave ‘ Sir John ;’  
And thus the old ‘ Mug House ’ fireside  
Was nightly circled by its throng.”

Profusion make their tables groan  
With rarities by sea and land,  
But can their riches buy true mirth ?  
Can all their power and will combin'd  
To fireside joys give freer birth  
Than with the artisan we find ?  
Oh, no ! the heart cannot be taught  
To call up pleasure at its will,  
Enjoyment best by toil is bought,  
Labour brings relaxation still,—  
And thus it was, the merry group  
That kept the Mug House fireside warm,  
Daily to toil were wont to stoop ;  
Nightly they shar'd sweet friendship's charm.  
And 'mongst them with his merry tale  
The Cobbler gained each list'ning ear,  
His tongue was never known to fail  
*So long as it was wet with beer.*  
He lived from thence full four long miles,  
And as he felt himself at home,  
He thought not of the awkward stiles,  
'And did not fear by night to roam.  
Thus the bright hours, with pleasure fraught,  
Wing'd their glad way untold, unheard,  
Unburden'd by one anxious thought,  
As free as flies the uncag'd bird ;  
But all things have an end in time,  
And Cobblers e'en must bow to fate,  
St. Anne's struck twelve in lengthen'd chime,  
The Landlord hinted it was late,  
For one by one had bade good night,  
Until the snob was left alone.  
The night was cold, no moon shone bright,  
The wind complained with dreary moan,  
But Cobbling Tom car'd nought for this,  
He threw his bag across his back,  
He paid the waiter, snatch'd a kiss,  
And wish'd the sky were not so black ;  
For truth to say, nor stars nor moon,  
Nor streak of light around appear'd,





BEWDLEY,—LOAD STREET AND ST. ANNE'S CHURCH.

"But all things have an end in time,  
And Cobblers e'en must bow to fate,

St. Anne's struck twelve in lengthen'd chime,  
The Landlord hinted it was late."

Save where the bridge-lamps, 'midst the gloom,  
 Their flickering half-worn flame uprear'd.  
 So Tom by dint of stagg'ring, pass'd  
 The "Hart and Dove," and "Robin Hood,"  
 And by good luck he reach'd at last  
 The spot where once the "Bridge-house" stood,  
 And being fond of vows, he swore  
 That should man, angel, or the devil,  
 But cross his path that night, he'd floor  
 Them one and all if not quite civil;  
 And thus, between his stagg'ring, swearing,  
 Bawling, singing staves, and roaring,  
 He lost his natural upright bearing,  
 And took a fit of easy snoring,—  
 For in his course he lost his road,  
 And wander'd up a lonely lane,  
 Where finding ale a heavy load,  
 He fell, and tried to rise in vain.

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## PART II.

 SHOWING HOW THE ENEMIES OF BEWDLEY USED TO EMPLOY  
 THEMSELVES.
 

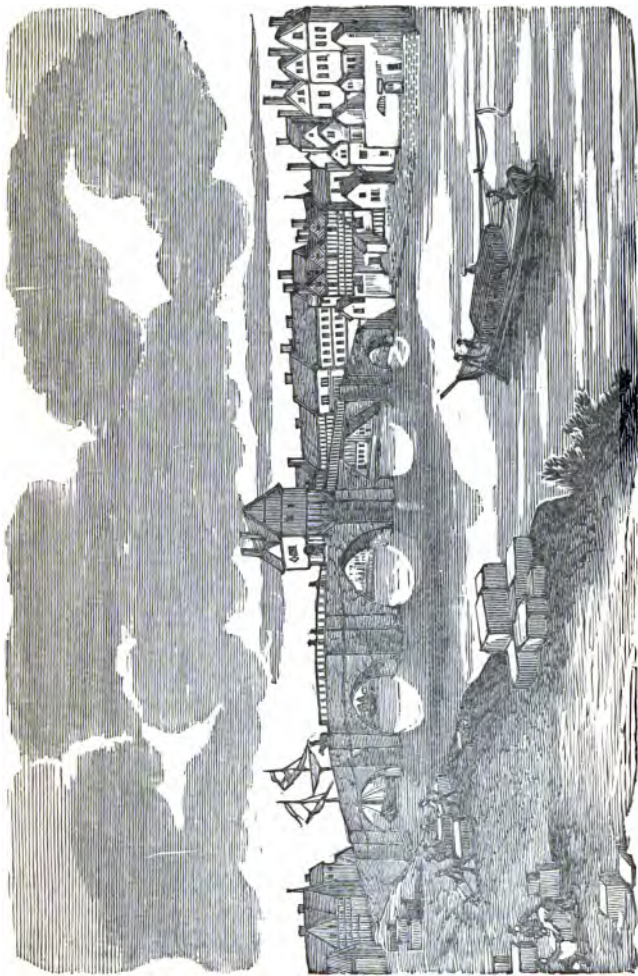
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"Evil be thou my good."

MILTON.

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The morning sun had scarce begun  
 To travel from the east,  
 When Satan rose, put on his clothes,  
 And sallied out in haste;  
 "Ho! bring a spade," the Devil said,  
 "That is both strong and new,  
 I vow by Jove, who reigns above,  
 That Bewdley town shall rue."  
  
 They brought him out a new spade that  
 Would cut in two the moon;  
 And wishing all to know what squall  
 Had wak'd him up so soon,



THE OLD BRIDGE, BEWDLEY. (NORTH.)

“ For truth to say, nor stars nor moon,  
Nor streak of light around appear’d,  
Save where the bridge-lamps, ’midst the gloom,  
Their flickering half-worn flames uprear’d.”

He thus averr'd, that having heard  
The folk of Bewdley town  
Had risen high in great Jove's eye  
For being pious grown.

He had resolv'd to have it solv'd,  
And learn if it was true ;  
So for the nonce, had sped at once  
His plea on high to sue,  
And begg'd of Jove, their faith to prove,  
That he would grant him leave,  
In any way that he should say,  
Their duty to bereave.

" Why," said the god, " thou know'st my nod  
Could easily make them true ;  
But just to pain thy hopes so vain,  
I grant this unto you,—  
Thy plans devise, and by surprise  
Thou may'st upon them fall,  
In any form, by fire or storm,  
As best may suit thy gall.

But 't must be done before the sun  
*Springs twice from out the east."*  
" Soon then I sped unto my bed,  
That I might have some rest,  
Though mortals say that night and day  
I travel to and fro,  
And never think I have a blink  
Of sleep to ease my woe.

So now my friends, as time fast spends,  
I must no longer stay,  
For look bright Sol begins to roll,  
And ushers in the day."  
With spade and net then off he set,  
With many a fearful stride,  
And ne'er felt lame until he came  
A mile from Severn side.

When down he laid his net and spade  
 To wipe his reeking brow,  
 And looked about to see what route  
 He'd better follow now;  
 But road nor way before him lay,  
 So far as he could view:  
 Nor house, nor town, upwards nor down,  
 Which put him in a stew.

\* \* \* \* \*

And thus soliloquising he began,—  
 " Never since first I caused the fall of man,  
 Since first I stood on Mount Niphates' height,  
 Have I been wearied as I feel this night:  
 Oh! why should I thus give myself such trouble  
 For mere ambition, a poor empty bubble,  
 Why should I fret about these Bewdley folk,  
 Have I not plenty more beneath my yoke?  
 Here have I travell'd over icebound mountains;  
 Waded through ocean's deep unfathomed fountains;  
 Wearied my eyes on leafless sunburnt plains;  
 Bore the cold east winds and the southern rains;  
 Debarred myself of food, of sleep, of pause;  
 Just to entrap a few within my claws!  
 Oh! my dear friends Mammon and Ariel,  
 Could you but witness this my heavy trial!  
 Oh! Dagon, Orus, Isis, and Osiris,  
 Did you but know how weary your poor sire is!  
 Oh! Moloch, Thammuz, Azazel, and Rameel,  
 Could you but ease the cruel pains I now feel!  
 Dear Chemos, Beelzebub, and Asmadai,  
 Would you were here, I then could freely die!  
 Oh! Ashtaroth, Adramelec, and Arico,  
 That ye were here to make me more heroic!  
 Oh! all my Pandemonium friends and cousins,  
 Who my four river's banks now throng by dozens,  
 (Styx, Phlegethon, Cocytus, and Acheron)  
 The thoughts of you increase my grievous burden

Would I could plunge within sweet Lethe's stream,  
 There would I gladly in oblivion dream,  
 Ne'er roam again upon this world's rough face,  
 Ne'er seek for Bewdley or such unknown place.  
 But now as I'm so far I must speed on,  
 The sun will rise before three hours are gone,  
 And then my time allotted will expire."  
 With that he rose with strong renew'd desire,

\* \* \* \* \*

When straight before, he heard a snore  
 So loud, so long, so deep,  
 That made him stare, and look with care,  
 For him that lay asleep :  
 When soon he found, upon the ground  
 The Cobbler's outstretched form,  
 In Morpheus's arms, free from alarms  
 Of rain, hail, snow, or storm,  
 Whether to shake, and thus awake  
 Snob Tom, and ask his way,  
 Or let him sleep, are things too deep  
 To be revealed to-day.

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### PART III.

#### SHOWING HOW THE FRIEND OF BEWDLEY OVERCAME THE ENEMY OF BEWDLEY

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"Stratagem is better than force."

OLD PROVERB.

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With gladness the features of Satan now beam'd,  
 As the Cobbler lay stretch'd at his feet,  
 And thus to himself, "whoe'er could have dream'd  
 That a guide I so haply should meet,  
 I'll just throw my net o'er his sleep-bound form,  
 Then ask the best road to this town ;



**THE DEVIL'S SPADEFUL, NEAR BEWDLEY.**

“ And stooping down carefully put just a sup  
In Tom's open mouth as he lay,

Who baw'd out as though at the Mug House, “ one cup—  
One cup more of old beer, I pray.”

But, no,—perhaps that would but raise up a storm,  
It is better to smile than to frown.”  
Then out of his pocket he drew a small keg  
Of genuine old Usquebaugh,  
Which for strength 'fore or since that “Tam” rode his Meg,  
No Irish or Scotchman e'er saw,  
And stooping down carefully put just a sup  
In Tom's open mouth as he lay,  
Who bawl'd out as though at the Mug House, “One cup—  
One cup more of old beer, I pray,  
That last had some strength—oh! it went down so sweet.”  
Quoth Old Nick, “That was whisky, not beer!”  
Such a gruff voice made Tom quickly jump to his feet,  
Such a sight at once filled him with fear,—  
His hair stood on end, his eyesight grew dim, and  
His knees shook and trembled like leaves,  
He fell—for no longer through fright could he stand,  
And bellow'd out lustily, “Thieves!”  
“Why, my friend,” quoth the Devil, no thieves, I am sure,  
Are near you,—come, don't be afraid,  
Take a drop of this whisky, your fears it will cure.”  
In drinking Tom ne'er disobey'd.  
He took such a swig that his eyes look'd as red  
As the stars that now twinkled around;  
His heart soon felt warm, then, raising his head,  
He asked old Nick where he was bound?  
Quoth he, “I'm for Bewdley, perhaps you can tell  
The nearest and best way to take;  
Or mayhap you yourself within it may dwell,  
If so, your companion I'll make.”  
“Why no,” said the Cobbler, “I live nowhere near  
To the town that you say you're in quest,  
But, come, let us swig again at your *old beer*,  
And then on my journey I'll haste;  
But pray, if I may be so bold as to ask,  
What's your business at old Bewdley town?”  
“Why, to tell you the whole would be no easy task,”  
Quoth the Devil, “but let us sit down:  
You see that of late they've raised up my hate,  
Because they ne'er visit my land,



So hence I have carried from Stromboli's height  
 This spadeful of earth in my hand,  
 Which, of course, you perceive will easily stay  
 The river which past Bewdley flows,  
 And ere the bright sun shall usher the day,  
 They'll be every one drowned, friends and foes ;  
 And then o'er the river each moment I'll watch,  
 And draw them all into my net,  
 I think I shall have such a numerous batch  
 As never, at once, I caught yet.  
 So now I must hasten, the sun will soon rise,  
 I am anxious to finish this job."  
 (Tom thought 'twas no sin to mislead *him* with lies.)  
 "You're mad, without doubt," said the Snob.  
 "Mad," quoth the Devil, "no, 'tis surely yourself,  
 The whisky has got in your head."  
 "Oh, no!" said the Cobbler, "I'm not such an elf,  
 Don't by any such folly be led ;  
 You see this full bag of old shoes that I bear,  
 (And straightway he emptied them down)  
 I'm no christian if each one and every pair  
 I've not worn since I left Bewdley town."  
 "What! can that be true?" quoth the Devil in rage,  
 "If such be the case, I am done,  
 I'll never more war with these Bewdley folk wage,  
 I am off it, for here comes the sun."  
 With that he soon threw down the earth from his spade,  
 Turned his back and was quick out of sight.  
 "But, oh! such a smell of the brimstone," Tom said,  
 "He ne'er had as on that famous night."  
 So Tom filled his bag up again, and vowed oft,  
 Let what would be to stick to his trade ;  
 But vows are like pastry, both brittle and soft,  
 And as often (Tom knew) broke as made.

## M O R A L.

So now all ye that love brown ale,  
 Pray take a warning from this tale :—  
 Whene'er ye go to drink your mugs  
 Don't stop to finish up with jugs,  
 Or else the hours will steal away,  
 And homeward as you reeling stray,

You surely sometimes will get evil,  
 Or, like the Cobbler, meet the Devil;  
 And then who knows what would ensue!—  
 He might be less polite to you,  
 Care not for wife or child a fig,  
 But take you off a pretty jig,—  
 Sink you, perhaps, in some wide bog,  
 Or drop you through a southern fog,  
 Or leave you top of cold Mont Blanc,  
 Or drown you in some Eastern tank,—  
 Or take you to the world's end wall,  
 And down through Chaos let you fall.  
 So when you go to drink your mugs,  
 Don't stop to finish up with jugs.

The mention of Mount Niphates, in Part 2, was suggested by my perusal of Milton's "Paradise Lost," Book 3, where he says,

"Toward the coast of earth beneath,  
 Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,  
 Throws his steep flight in many an æry wheel;  
 Nor stay'd till on Niphates' top he lights."

The gods to whom Satan appealed, as appears a few lines lower down, are named in Book 1 of the same poem. Pandemonium, of which I have made use, is described by Milton in Book 10, thus—

"Pandemonium; city and proud seat  
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd  
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.

I have introduced the matter of Satan's transporting the spadeful of rock from the Mount of Stromboli, the principal of the Lipari Islands, to show that he doubtless has a right to abstract land, from any *sulphureous* place on the face of the earth. That sort of soil too would be most congenial to his taste, or rather it may be said to his sense of smelling.

With regard to the Cobbler's possession of a bag full of shoes on this momentous occasion, I have only to say, that it was usual in past times, for shoemakers to go round amongst their customers periodically, to get orders for new shoes, and to

collect those that wanted mending, which when mended, gave such men as Tom an opportunity for another fuddle. Of course Tom felt at once that if Satan carried out his threat to stop the Severn, his customers would be drowned, and that the sequel would be a serious diminution of his trade. Necessity therefore in this case, as in many others, led to Tom's invention of a lie, which cannot be considered very reprehensible, as he was only deceiving the Father of Lies.

Mr. Randall, of Coalport, in his pleasing volume "The Severn Valley," has inserted at pages 98 and 99, a poetical legend consisting of forty-nine lines attributing the existence of the hill so well known as "The Wrekin," near Wellington, in Shropshire, to Satan's desire of damming up the Severn at Shrewsbury, in revenge upon the Mayor of Shrewsbury, who had neglected to provide him with a dinner, although he had not reached that town! but was only on his way thither. This is very lame, and as it appeared some seventeen years after my legend was first published at Bewdley, the author must have read mine, and, then thought he could pay the Wrekin a compliment.



## CHAPTER XI.

"Life is a drama of a few brief acts ;  
The actors shift, the scene is often changed,  
Pauses and revolutions intervene,  
The mind is set to many a varied tune,  
And jars and plays in harmony by turns."

ALEXANDER BETHUNE.

I FELT the force of Bethune's words keenly on my removal to Kidderminster. I had pictured to myself an undisturbed length of days when I bought the house and garden at Wribbenhall. I spent a good sum in making the one comfortable, and the other neat, and then there was nothing for it but I must leave them owing to the "looming in the distance" of the railway.

There was one comfort in knowing that I should still live in the same parish, and should come and go on my usual business to the old spot.

I laid down a plan for markets thus—

Mondays to Ludlow.

Tuesdays to Bromsgrove, or Liverpool, when necessary.

Wednesdays to Wolverhampton and Cleobury, alternately.

Thursdays to Kidderminster.

Fridays to Stourbridge.

Saturdays to Bridgenorth.

There was no railway to any of these markets except Liverpool, and for that no nearer than at Wolverhampton. In this case I used to drive to Wednesfield Heath Station, a mile beyond that town, taking an ostler from the Swan Inn to return with the horse and gig, and to take care of them until I got back from Liverpool in the evening.

To do this long journey I had to start at four o'clock in the morning, so as to catch the quarter to six morning train at Wednesfield Heath on its way from Birmingham to Liverpool. I got home about eleven o'clock at night, which made a nineteen hours day of it.

There were no return tickets, nor third class carriages in those early days of railways; and the second class were open at the sides, so that we had plenty of fresh air, and plenty of rain too on wet days to keep us alive. The fares were about double what they now are, and we had to get out at Edge Hill Station, and go down in an omnibus, or trudge it into Liverpool.

The worst part of the journey was coming home from Wolverhampton at night, but as "what cannot be cured, must be endured," and as I had to do it frequently, I soon became reconciled thereto.

The other five days journeys were comparatively easy, and as there was a change of scenery, and the "old familiar faces" every day in each week, time passed pleasantly enough.

The parish of Kidderminster is subdivided thus, 1, The Borough; 2, the Foreign; 3, the Hamlet of Lower Mitton, which includes Stourport; 4, Wribbenhall; 5, Trimpeley; and 6, Hurcott. The whole of the parish contains 12,474 acres as surveyed and measured in 1840.

*Kid* signifies, in the old British language, the brow of a hill; *dur*, water; and *minster*, a church. (*vide*, In carta lacerata, penes J. Broughton, A.M., Ludi Mag. Scholæ Hartlebur.) At the Conquest, the manor of Chideminstre was the king's property, with sixteen corn farms. Henry II. gave it to Manser, his favourite. There has been much learned dispute about the ancient name of this parish. A facetious writer asserts the name to have been originally Cadon-Minster, and adduces as a proof, thereof, that King Cadon lived there in the days of the Round Table, and that from his day the following verse has been as familiar as household words in the people's mouths:—

King Cadon saw a pretty maid,  
King Cadon would have kissed her;

The damsel slipt aside and said,  
King Cador, you have missed her.

*i.e.*, Cador-missed-her, vulgarly called Kidderminster.

The rectory of Kidderminster was appropriated to the lazareth-house of Maiden-Bradley A.D. 1335. In the 37th Henry VIII., the king granted it to John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, afterwards duke of Northumberland, but he subsequently forfeited it, and his life, for high treason. In the first of Queen Mary, it became the property of the Blounts of Kinlet; but at the death of Sir Edward Blount, without issue, it was conveyed to the Earl of Newport, who sold it to Waller the poet, and he sold it to Daniel Dobbins, Esq., of London, in 1635, (the deed was in the possession of the Soleys of Sandbourn in my time) except that part sold to raise the £10,000 Waller had to pay to the Parliament as a fine on account of what was called "Waller's Plot." In the edition of 1711 of his "Life," he is said to have sold £1,000 per annum to pay this fine.

The western division of this parish contains twenty-four square miles; the eastern, from six to seven. In the "Life of Baxter," it is stated to be twenty miles round. In 1550, the town contained about 300 inhabitants; in 1773, 1,180 houses and 5,749 inhabitants; Wribbenhall, 145 houses and 614 inhabitants; and Mitton or Metune the same; and in 1851, the parish numbered 24,000. It anciently returned members to Parliament, as Walter Cardigan and Walter Lightfoot sat for it in 23rd Edward I. Baxter, in his "Life and Times," says, the Kidderminster people were neither poor nor rich; few of the magistrates worth £40 per annum; the most thriving carpet masters gained but £500 or £600 in twenty years, and lived but little better than their workmen. In 1677, there were 417 looms; most of the masters having but two or three looms, and only one of them seven. In 1735, the carpet trade began; and in 1772, there were 250 carpet looms at work, whilst the silk and worsted looms numbered 1,700.

In Habingdon's time there was a representation, in the great east window of the parish church, of the founder, John Niger de Kidderminster, in a kneeling posture, having in his hand a

picture of the church, of which he is making an offering to God. Joseph Cox the attorney, who was complimented from the bench, by the Chancellor Talbot, for his faithfulness to his clients, lived here for forty years, and died in 1737. The grandfather of the great Lord Somers was said to be buried here. The latter wrote as much as would fill sixty quarto volumes. He was first noticed by Sir F. Winnington, the then solicitor-general.

Much dissatisfaction had existed for some years before I went to live at Kidderminster, as to the manner in which the Grammar School had been conducted.

Under the Rev. William Miles (a former head master) the upper school had dwindled down to two or three scholars. The second master (the Rev. Thomas Morgan) was appointed head master in 1795, and although he had twenty scholars at the commencement of his mastership, they had decreased to nine in 1832, the date at which the Commissioners visited the school, to examine into its condition and management.

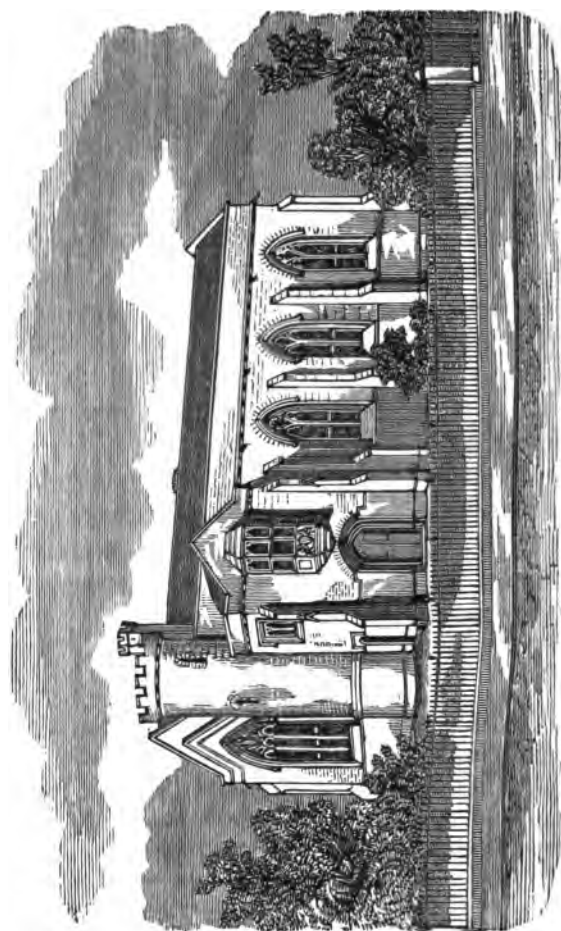
The Charity Commissioners, in their Report published after this visitation, say—

“ Besides the property in the rental, there is a large school, divided into two rooms for the upper and lower school, adjoining the east end of the church. It is in very good repair. There are also two houses in Church Street for the use of the upper master and usher, which were built on land purchased by the trustees for that purpose in the year 1805. The cost of the land and expense of building was altogether about £1,800. It appears that leases were granted for twenty-one years, shortly previous to this time, on fines, with a view to raise money, to meet this expenditure.

“ There are also two gardens belonging to these houses, on the opposite side of the street, where the houses of the master and usher formerly stood, which were pulled down, having been ruinous and in decay.

“ The chief payments are the masters' salaries, amounting, as hereafter stated, together to £435 per annum. There is also paid about £6 annually for insurance, and the rest is expended in repairs. The present bailiff, at Michaelmas 1831, received, with the book of accounts, £88 17s. 4d. from his predecessor.

“ The Rev. Thomas Morgan was appointed under master in the year 1787, and head master in 1795, on the resignation of the Rev. William Miles, and was licensed by the Bishop of Worcester. Mr. Miles had become



KIDDERMINSTER NEW GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



unfit to conduct the school, and it was agreed that if he would resign, he should be allowed a portion of the head master's stipend, then fixed at £100 per annum, during his life; and the Bishop of Worcester (Dr. Hurd) entered his approbation of this arrangement, by signing a memorandum to that effect in the minute book. Mr. Miles continued to receive £26 a year under this agreement till his death, about 1829.

"Mr. Morgan received £74 per annum till the year 1818, when his salary was increased to £160 subject, however, to the payment of £26 to Mr. Miles; and in 1828 it was further increased to £290, which sum he has received entire since the death of Mr. Miles. Mr. Morgan does not live in the house belonging to the head master, nor has he resided there for twenty years. It is let by him to a tenant for thirty guineas per annum, with the garden, the tenant paying all taxes and rates. Mr. Morgan is curate of Stone, which is distant two miles and three quarters from Kidderminster, where he resides in a house which he rents. He is also rector of the adjoining parish of Rushock, where he keeps a resident curate, having himself a license for non-residence from the late bishop, on account of his being head master of the free grammar school at Kidderminster.

"When Mr. Morgan was appointed head master, there were not above two or three boys in the upper school, but about eighteen or twenty, who had been with him in the lower, followed him into the upper school. From that time the number in the upper school has varied from seventeen to four. The practice now is, to take all boys into the upper school who require to learn Latin, that language not being now *as formerly* taught in the lower school. At the time of our inquiry, there were nine boys in the upper school, sons of respectable persons of the town and parish. The boys are not supplied with books out of the funds of the school, but there are some books of general literature in the school accessible to the boys, which have been paid for by the trustees. The head master does not consider himself as a superintendent of the lower school.

"Mr. William Fawkes, the under master, was appointed in the year 1813, with a salary of £80, which has been raised to £145, since the year 1828. He occupies the house and garden belonging to the under master. The children in his school are instructed in reading, writing, and accounts, and they are expected to be able to read in the Bible before they are admitted. When Mr. Fawkes was appointed, he was not required to be able to give instruction in the classics, all boys requiring such instruction being now placed under Mr. Morgan, by whom they are taught in the morning; and they learn writing and accounts from the under master every afternoon, during the whole of the school hours. There were ten boys in

the lower school at the time of our inquiry, which is stated as the average number attending since Christmas, 1831.

"Boys from this school are entitled to exhibitions at Worcester College, Oxford, provided there is no claimant from Bromsgrove, Feckenham, Worcester, and Hartlebury.

"The small number of boys attending this school would naturally excite a suspicion that it was not carefully attended to by the master, or by those whose duty it is to see that the masters discharge their duty efficiently. The under master, indeed, assigns as a reason, that the inhabitants of Kidderminster generally have an objection to gratuitous education. We do not, however, think that this is proved by the fact adduced, that some boys have left the free grammar school to go to a private school lately opened in the town, where a quarterage is paid; and the complaints which we have received of the inefficiency of this institution, is an answer to that suggestion, and we must resort to other grounds for an explanation. Some trifling charges made by the lower master, and the demand of payment in advance, has given offence to many individuals, and we think the trustees might usefully interfere in regulating these matters; and out of the funds, *now so ample*, might pay not only for books but also for firing, and cleaning the school, instead of allowing the under master to make his charges for these expenses. We can have no doubt that the inefficiency of the school may, in a great measure, be attributed to the non-residence of the head master, who, although he may be very regular in his attendance at the opening of the school every morning, is not likely to be considered so efficient as if resident on the spot. It is to be regretted that the trustees could ever have suffered the master to let his house, and reside at a distance of nearly three miles from the school. The words of the decree above given particularly require that no person should be elected schoolmaster, but such 'as should wholly and altogether employ themselves as schoolmasters of the school, and not in any other profession or business, which might in any manner hinder and take away the continual attendance and diligence of such schoolmaster upon the school, and the scholars therein.' In point of fact, the attendance of the head master is confined, by the present system of management, to the mornings.

*"The active interference of the trustees is imperatively called for to place this school, now so amply endowed, upon a better foundation. The Bishop of Worcester ought to be consulted; and we trust the inhabitants of Kidderminster would soon feel and acknowledge the benefit derived from their exertions.*

From the above date (1832) the school was conducted by the

Rev. Thomas Morgan, as head master, and Mr. William Fawkes, as second master, down to 1843. The same rules as noticed by the Charity Commissioners were carried out, and the school varied from forty to sixty-three scholars. It was thought proper to have a new scheme, in 1841, and a petition was presented to the Court by the old feoffees, dated the 31st of July in that year; these were, Joseph Nowcomb, William Nichols, Abraham Turner, William Boycot, sen., John Crane, and Henry Crane; inquiring and praying, if the mayor and town-council had any power to appoint any of its members as feoffees, that new feoffees might be appointed, and a new scheme granted for the government of the school, and its estates, revenues, schoolmasters, and their stipends. It was thereupon declared, by order dated 18th April, 1842, that the powers of the high bailiff, or mayor, had ceased on the passing of the 5th and 6th Will. IV., cap. 76 (Municipal Corporation Act); but it further declared, that when any new feoffees were appointed, the mayor for the time being would be entitled to be one.

A report consequent on this petition and the order was issued, dated 19th November, 1844, by the Master, Sir George Rose, in which it was stated, that applications had been made in July, 1842, to John Lea, Thomas Bradley, George Hooman, Henry Woodward, and B. H. Woodward, of the borough; the Rev. T. L. Claughton, H. Chellingworth, J. Chellingworth, W. B. Best, and J. S. Barber, of the foreign, to allow themselves to be proposed as new feoffees, to make up the proper number of sixteen and that Thomas Hallen, clerk to the trust, had made affidavit, 4th March, 1843, that they were fit persons, jointly with the Bishop of Worcester, his chancellor, and the mayor for the time being; the Master, therefore, approved of them.

The clerk, at the same time, in the above-named affidavit, swore that the school income, in 1825, was £491 19s. 1d., and at that period (1843), £507 5s.; that there were eight boys in the upper, and forty boys in the lower school; that the head master was aged about eighty, and the second master, seventy years. In the *Times* of 26th January, 1843, a new head master was

advertised for, at a salary of £200, and house; with £100 to be added thereto, on the decease of the then master. There was nothing said in this about boarders, but when the candidates applied for the head mastership, a circular was sent to each of them which stated that they should be allowed to keep as many boarders as the old residence next the church gates would accommodate; that the parents of the town boys paid nothing for education; that the school was open to the parish at large, and that the education was classical and mathematical.

The second schedule in this report ordered, amongst other things, the following alterations from the plans upon which the school had always been previously conducted:—That the head master should retire upon 25th March, 1843, with a pension of £100 per annum; and the second master, upon 25th March, 1844, with a pension of £100 per annum. The rents of the school properties, Lady-day, 1843, to Lady-day, 1844, were £537 14s. 6d. to which may be added, for that year, £112 1s. 4d., paid for some land, taken and appropriated by the turnpike trustees. The rents collected, from 1826 to 1834, were £4,019 14s. 4½d.; and from 1835 to 1843, £4,703 6s. 10½d. The clerk's legal bills, from 1841 to 1844, amounted to £116 13s. 3d., and the Chancery, expenses during the same period were £291 11s. 8d. When all demands were paid, the school was £240 in debt. That the vicar of Kidderminster should always be a feoffee, *ex officio*; that the school revenues should pay for the repairs of its properties. That the surplus of the rents should be invested in the three per cents., in the names of the four senior feoffees. That the head master should be in holy orders, and a graduate of an English university. That the number of boys should be limited to forty, sons of parishioners, who should be members of the Church of England; and that if forty such could not be found, that they should be made up from boys out of the parish, sons of members of the Church of England. That Latin and Greek should be taught free, but that the commercial branches should be chargeable at the rate of £4 per annum; and that if more than forty parishioners sons offered to enter the school, all

above that number should pay at the rate of £8 per annum for their commercial education. That the head master should have £300 per annum, and his residence rent-free; and the second master, £100 per annum, and his residence rent free; and that the head master should be allowed to live in any house he pleased, within the borough, for the purpose of accommodating his boarders. That no boy should be admitted to the school under eight years of age. That an examiner should be paid ten guineas for his services at the annual examination; and the clerk £20, and the collector £10, per annum, for their services.

These new rules were all contrary to the old charter, and the method upon which the school had been before conducted.

In the last rule (21st) of this schedule, the commercial scholars then in the school were specially permitted to remain as scholars, free of any charge, up to the 25th of March, 1845. Between the date of the petition and the order, a scheme was drawn up, and in the minute book of the feoffees, under date of the 7th January, 1843, the following words occur:—"That the scheme now read be adopted, fair copied, and signed by the feoffees." So that the scheme was drawn up in Kidderminster, with the consent of the feoffees. The duties of the new head master commenced 25th March, 1843; and on the 20th of that month, at a meeting of the feoffees, it was ordered that the school should be shut up, from 25th March to June 24, and a circular, of which the following is a copy, was forwarded to the parents of the boys who were then in the school:—

*Kidderminster, March 21st, 1843.*

"SIR,—The feoffees of the Kidderminster free grammar school regret the necessity which is imposed upon them, on account of projected alterations in the upper school, of closing the same on the 25th instant; and, in making this communication to you, I am directed at the same time to inform you, that the upper school will re-open after the Midsummer vacation, when the new head master will commence his duties, on a day of which you will have due notice.

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient and faithful servant,

"THOMAS HALLEN, *Solicitor to the Feoffees.*"

Pending this interregnum, a proposition was made to exchange an estate called Green Hill, and farm buildings belonging to the school (of  $50\frac{1}{2}$  acres), for a large house and about nine acres of ground in the borough, which it was reported the head master had purchased for his residence, and that of his family and the boarders. Upon this, Mr. William Boycot, a solicitor, and a son of one of the feoffees, sent the following notice to the Feoffees:—

“ *Kidderminster, 27th, March, 1843.*”

“GENTLEMEN,—I have just been informed that you are about exchanging the farm at Green Hill for the house and land at Woodfield. Now, as I consider such an exchange to be highly prejudicial to the interests of the said school, and to the inhabitants of the borough and foreign of Kidderminster, I, as one of such inhabitants, do hereby give you notice, that if you enter into any agreement to carry such exchange into effect, I shall apply to the attorney-general to file a bill, at the instance of the Court, to set aside such exchange, and to inquire into the particulars thereof.

“ WILLIAM BOYCOT, Junior.

“ *To the Feoffees of the Free Grammar School.*”

Mr. Boycot also, on the 23rd October, 1843, applied to the feoffees for a copy of the proposed scheme, when, as their minute-book records, it was resolved, “That it appears inexpedient to furnish any copy of a scheme which is not yet perfected;” yet, strange to say, at the same meeting, it is recorded that “the draft scheme was finally settled by the feoffees.”

On the 29th January, 1845, there were twenty-eight boys in the upper school, and five more applications. On the 26th January, 1846, a son of Mr. William Fawcett was refused entrance to the school, because his parents were not members of the Church of England.

On the 10th February, 1847, another proposal was made to exchange the before-named farm and the then school building for Woodfield House and grounds, and a new school building, to be built adjoining thereto; the new school to be erected at the expense of the recipient or recipients of the Green Hill estate.

At another meeting of the feoffees this exchange was recommended to be effected by Midsummer, 1847, on condition that the head master should defray all the legal and incidental expenses

attendant thereupon; and his salary to be reduced to £240, but to have Woodfield rent free, being estimated at £60 per annum, and the repairs to be done at the expense of the school rents; the head master to be tenant thereof from Lady-day, 1848.

Upon this, Mr. William Boycot, jun., sent the following notice:—

*" To the Feoffees of the Kidderminster Grammar School.*

*" 23rd October, 1847.*

" I give you and each and every of you notice, that proceedings will be taken to set aside the exchange, if entered into between you, the feoffees of the Kidderminster Free Grammar School and the Rev. W. Cockin, and you the said feoffees of the said Free Grammar School and Mr. Jeremiah Mathews, for the following reasons:—

" First. That the Act of Parliament of the 1st and 2nd George IV., cap. 92, intituled, 'An Act to authorise the exchange of lands, tenements, or hereditaments, subject to trusts for charitable purposes, for other lands, tenements, or hereditaments,' has not been complied with.

" Second. That the commission is illegal.

" Third. That the exchange is unequal, unfair, and unjust.

" Fourth. That the exchange is detrimental to the interests of the school and the inhabitants of Kidderminster.

" Fifth. That a proper survey and valuation of the different lands, tenements, and hereditaments has not been made.

" And, lastly. That the title to the land and houses agreed to be given in exchange by the said Rev. W. Cockin and Jeremiah Mathews is doubtful, if not bad.

*" Wm. Boycot, Junior."*

The animus of all these transactions on the part of the feoffees, will be seen by the following copy of a minute in the feoffees book dated 29th January, 1844, which states—

" It is therefore hoped that this, their last proposition, having for its object the speedy restoration of this school to a Free Grammar School in all its integrity, will be entertained by the master, so that all the benefits to be derived from the new scheme may be at once attained; a desideratum which they fear will be otherwise too long postponed, as the room taken up in the school room with this English school, prevents the possibility of admission of scholars whose parents are anxious to avail themselves of a classical education for their children, according to the spirit of the original endow-

ment, and which an election of an under master, competent to teach Latin and Greek, will enable the feoffees at once to accomplish."

It was apparent to all that the object was to get a flourishing boarding school. The old school and residences were deserted, a new house and grounds were purchased by the head master, and by-and-by exchanged by him with the feoffees for the estate of  $50\frac{1}{2}$  acres belonging to the school. A new school was built contiguous to the head master's and the boarders' residence, for their convenience. This involved a heavy outlay, and the inhabitants were appealed to by the head master to the following effect, by circular, in December, 1847:—

"The Grammar School of King Charles I., at Kidderminster, has long been labouring under two serious inconveniences; first, the room in which the school has been held, adjoins, and was originally a chapel connected with the parish church; from its extreme antiquity it has now become much dilapidated; whilst its position, in the midst of a crowded burying ground, has been considered objectionable on the score of health, and has necessarily been attended with much desecration of the church and tombs. Secondly, the house appropriated to the head master is so small, and in so confined a situation, that in the scheme granted by the Court of Chancery, in the year 1843, the head master was authorised to let it, and procure for himself a better and more convenient residence.

"The consequence of this state of things has been, that the present head master purchased a house and small estate at Woodfield, adjoining the town of Kidderminster, where he has received a considerable number of boarders; but as this house, together with all interest in the school there established, were the present head master's private property, and it was uncertain whether any future head master would be able to purchase them, it became a matter of some consideration how the benefits which have resulted to the school under its present management could be permanently secured to it, instead of being dependant on the continuance of the present head master.

"The most desirable plan, under all the circumstances, appeared to be to effect an exchange—the feoffees giving up an estate belonging to their trust, and receiving in return the Woodfield House and estate; and that a new grammar school should then be erected on the estate at Woodfield, which is most eligibly situated for the purpose. The insurmountable obstacle to this arrangement was the expense of erecting the new school-room; but whilst the plan was in agitation, the sum of £1,200 was most munificently placed at the disposal of the feoffees for this purpose, pro-



vided such an exchange should be effected. Upon this, the feoffees at once applied to the lord bishop of the diocese, under the provisions of 1st and 2nd George IV., chap. 92, to issue a commission for the purpose of inquiring whether such an exchange would be for the benefit of the school. This commission, after due inquiry, has reported in favour of the exchange; and the report of the commissioners having been confirmed by the sanction of the lord bishop, the exchange is now effected.

"To the sum of £1,200, above mentioned, a further sum of £400 has been added by another individual; which sums will defray the expense of erecting a substantial school room of stone, fifty-nine feet long, twenty-seven feet wide, and twenty-two feet high; together with all the legal expenses connected with the exchange, which are necessarily heavy, and those of a subsequent application to the Court of Chancery, so that no charge whatever may fall upon the funds of the trust. It is, however, estimated, that to meet the architect's charges, and to supply new forms, desks, and fittings for the room, including gas and stoves, and to erect proper boundary walls, with iron railings, gates, &c., a further sum of at least £400 will be required.

"To raise this sum, the head master earnestly and confidently begs the aid of those who, either from local connexion feel an interest in the welfare of the Kidderminster Grammar School, or who, on wider principles, are anxious to advance the cause of education. He believes that the present arrangement will be beneficial to the school, by substituting a new room for the present dilapidated one, and in a more eligible situation. It will also be the means, by providing a suitable residence for future head masters, of securing in perpetuity the services of an efficient person, by which the character of the school must be raised and its usefulness increased; and, further, as this exchange will be the means of augmenting the income of the school, he has reason to hope that it will be in the power of the feoffees to found, at an early period, exhibitions, which seem now to be the only thing requisite for placing this school, in every respect, on a level with other similar institutions."

On the 7th of March, 1848, another petition was presented to the Court of Chancery by the head master, and the chairman of the feoffees (the Rev. T. L. Claughton), embracing the following particulars:—That it had been agreed upon to exchange the Green Hill estate for Woodfield House and grounds, and that such exchange had been effected on the 3rd of February, 1848. That it had also been agreed upon to erect a new school adjoining

Woodfield, on condition that the old school should be relinquished, and that an exhibition should be founded upon certain events.

On the 10th of March, an order was issued by the Court of Chancery, consequent on the above petition, for the Master in Chancery to approve of a new scheme for the school management. In pursuance of this order, a report was drawn up, dated 4th Nov., 1848, for a new scheme, which embraced the following particulars and new rules:—That the Bishop of Worcester should be visitor of the school. That £30 per annum should be expended, out of the school funds, for books and prizes for the boys. That the assistant master should be removable by the head master. That the masters should take as many boarders as the feoffees and visitor should approve of (accommodation was provided for fifty). That the second master should have the rents of the two old residences of the two masters, in addition to his £100 per annum. That the head master should be competent to decide, at a special meeting called for that purpose, as to the admissibility of the boys applying as free boys to enter the school, according to the circumstances of the case. And that the £4 per annum head-money on the free boys should be paid to the head master only.

Thus it will be seen that the foundation boys were limited to forty, at £4 per annum—that they could not be admitted if sons of Dissenters—that the best estate of the school was exchanged away for the profit and accommodation of the head master and his boarders—that he was enabled to have fifty of them—and that he should take the whole of the £160 the forty free boys paid, to his own use. In fact, the school endowment, and the new properties, were made subservient to the foundation of a flourishing boarding school.

In the new scheme there was originally included a clause to allow the surplus funds to accumulate for an exhibition, which should be open to the boarders to compete for. On the 21st of June, 1848, the feoffees were informed that the Master in Chancery had refused to allow the boarders to do so, and thereupon the chairman was deputed to go to London to get it allowed

if possible. I immediately took steps to prevent this, by instructing my solicitor to oppose it, and was successful. I also, at the same time, wrote to the chairman of the feoffees a letter on the subject, containing the following :—

*“ Kidderminster, June 24, 1848,*

“ DEAR SIR,—From the information I have had, I am alarmed at the intention of admitting the boarders residing at the head master’s house to the proposed exhibitions, which exhibitions are intended to be paid for out of the surplus funds of the Grammar School, after paying the head and second masters their salaries.

“ I am bold enough to think, it was never intended that the masters should have any right of claim to the surplus in the rents, after satisfying their prescribed salaries; but, even if it were so at the time of endowment, the intent has been altered since by calling upon the parents of day boys to pay a quarterly sum—that is, we will say, supposing there are twenty day boys who pay £80 per annum towards the income of the masters that £80, of course, creates £80 surplus in the whole; and it would be extremely unfair that the boarders (who do not thus contribute towards the general salaries of the two masters) should have the same chance of competing for the exhibitions as the day boys who do contribute.

“ I beg also to submit that the superior advantages which the boarders have of studying at the head master’s, and together, almost places it beyond hope for the day scholars (whose parents cannot possibly attend to them closely, as to their studies, when at home) ever to gain an exhibition; and I cannot entertain the opinion, for a moment, that the founder ever intended that boys, whose parents reside in the parish and pay all parish rates and taxes, and attend their parish church, should be supplanted by boys who are strangers to the place, and whose parents have no sympathy in the welfare of the town, nor pay an iota towards its rates.

“ It appears to many who wish the town school well, that the proposal, at which I feel alarmed, is favourable for the children of professional men, to the disadvantage of those of tradesmen: this opinion creates a jealousy which it would be well to avoid, in all cases; but, I fear, the contrary would be the case, if the boarders were admitted.

“ Were there no subscription required from the day boys, it would not be so much opposed, because then it could be urged that the funds of the school went to their education; and it would be much more reasonable that the masters should, in that case, enjoy the whole receipts, than devote any part of them to the benefit of the boarders, who contribute nothing to the school funds.

"I am aware of the great exertions and sacrifices you and others have devoted to the benefit of the school, and unless I felt deeply the importance of my views, I should be very loth—humble as I know I am—to say a word which could cause you the least uneasiness: and, if I am wrong, I should be very glad to be undeceived. I have seen the head master on the subject, and told him of the objections felt by others, as I did not believe the whole of the statements I had heard, until I had done so.

"I do not intend to think further upon it until I know your views, but thought it better to be candid whilst the proposition is young, than to complain after its adoption, which I should be very sorry to hear of.

"I remain, dear Sir, faithfully yours,

"GEORGE GRIFFITH."

"To the Rev. T. L. Claughton, Summer Hill."

To this I received the following reply:—

"Himley, June 27th.

"DEAR SIR,—I quite understand your feelings; it would be too long to go into the whole case, but I will give you the outline. The school is founded for forty boys of the borough and foreign of Kidderminster; in default of applicants, to be made up by applicants from any other place. These forty are the foundation. If there were this number of Kidderminster boys, no other boy could be admitted to the benefits of the foundation. There not being this number, the question now arises, whether the boarders at the head master's house are admissible on the foundation. In the case of Ludlow, the Lord Chancellor has decided that they are *not*. It is now before the Master in Chancery, whether they are to be so at Kidderminster. Lord Cottenham's decision is on one side. Lord Lyndhurst, the former Chancellor, decided the other way; so it is a fair subject for inquiry.

"Of my own private opinion, I say nothing. Whichever way the Court decides, it will always be my great desire and anxious endeavour to promote the interests of Kidderminster boys in every way in my power.

"I am, dear Sir, yours most faithfully,

"T. L. CLAUGHTON.

"I went up to London to represent the case, with the sanction of the feoffees, who, however, do not all think alike on the subject; but we leave it to the Court. I have only touched the general question;—on particulars, I will see you."

On the refusal of the Court to admit the boarders to compete for the exhibitions, the feoffees agreed, on the 25th of July, to leave

it out, which shewed clearly, that the educational welfare of the town-boys was not intended to be promoted thereby, but that it was merely with a view to draw a number of boarders to the school, for the private benefit of the master.

From the successful issue of this question, I was led to procure a copy of the foundation charter of King Charles the First, by which I was enabled to publish a familiar digest of it, as follows, in a pamphlet addressed to the parishioners :—

FELLOW PARISHIONERS,—I beg to congratulate you upon the decisions of the Lord Chancellor and Master in Chancery, excluding the sons of non-parishioners from any participation in the exhibitions that may be attached to the Grammar School.

As but few are aware what the orders of the inquisition issued by King Charles I. were, when the rules of the school were reconstructed, in the ninth year of his reign, I now proceed to lay them before you, and trust they will prove interesting.

What is commonly called the Charter of King Charles I. is nothing more nor less than an inquisition or trial held in this town on the 10th of October and after, in the ninth year of the reign of that King, before the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Worcester, James Littleton, Esq., his chancellor, and Messrs. Walter Blunte, John Wylde, William Warmstrey, Martyn Sandes, John Evett, William Corfield, and Richard Hayles Goud, at which trial all the tenants of the school properties and the existing authorities of the borough were summoned before the above jury, and a thorough investigation made as to the “mis-employment of lands, tenements, goods, and stock of money heretofore given to good and charitable uses within the towns of Bewdley and Kidderminster, and the parish of Stone, in the County of Worcester, according to a statute made in the three-and-fiftieth year of the raigne of Queene Elizabeth :—upon the oaths of John Gyles, and fiftene others, good and lawful men of the said county.”

It appears from the proceedings in this trial, that the school was of ancient date, it being stated in various parts of the charter, that previous deeds had been made by one Symon Clare of Kid-

derminster, "bearinge date the twelve daie of October, in the twentieth year of Queene Elizabeth; and another by Sir Edwarde Blunte, Knight, bearinge date the eight daie of Januarie, in the sixth year of the raigne of our late soveraigne Lord Kinge James," etc.; but no deeds are, I believe, now in existence previous to this of King Charles I., nor is it of any consequence that there should be, as this one superseded all others, and lays down with great clearness the future conduct of the school in all its relations.

To make the charter, or rather the verdict, on this important trial more clear I will divide its contents into three parts; namely, first, the list of lands, etc., belonging to the school, with the rents paid, and what ought to have been paid: secondly, the sentence against the then feoffees, the fines and reimbursements imposed upon the high bailiffs and the tenants, with their plea of release and the final verdict; and thirdly, what sort of education the boys were to receive, also what the duties and salaries of the schoolmasters were to be, and other minor necessary arrangements.

At the time in question, the funds and property were grossly misused, which induced a person of the name of Richard Pitt to prosecute the feoffees and all others concerned in their misuse. This of course was a heavy task, involving the ill will of the culpable parties and a very great expense. But had it not been for this patriotic individual, we know not if the school funds would ever have been placed on their proper footing: and so satisfied were the jury, on this occasion, of his disinterestedness, and the prostitution of the school funds by others, that they allowed him sixty pounds for his expenses (a large sum then) in the inquiry, and upon a hearing granted to the guilty parties, in mitigation of the verdict, a further sum of thirty pounds was voted, to enable him to meet and combat their statements;—these payments were taken from the moneys they had to refund, and the surplus after his expenses was ordered to be appropriated to the school.

The jury being empanelled and all parties summoned to appear,—we come to the first part of the business, namely the list

of lands, their term of letting, their real value, and the rents actually paid :

Premises.	Where situate or name.	Term of years.	Rent actu- ally paid.		Rent that ought to have been paid; or Annual Value	
			£	s. d.	£	s. d.
One parcel meadow ground and appurte- nances	School Lands	4	2	0	0	1 0 0
Twotenements half stable and a waste piece of ground and dole of meadow ground		4				
	Sutton Mead	4				2 0 0
Ditto	Blackstone	6	0	10	0	1 10 0
Ditto	Ditto	4	0	10	0	0 10 0
Tenement	Mill-street	6	1	6	8	2 0 0
Two acres of land	Colefield					
One acre of land	Ellornefield					
Tenement and three and half acres of land	Kidderminster	6	0	5	6	2 3 4
Barn and 4 acres land	Mill-street, &c.	6	0	10	0	5 3 4
One acre of land	School Land	6	0	2	0	0 6 8
Two acres of land	Colefield	6	no rent		1	10 4
Two acres of land	Church Fields	6	0	10	0	1 10 4
One acre of land	Colefield nr Foxhill	6	0	2	0	0 6 8
Seven Closes	{ The Deanes Lease for life and another lease in reversion.		3	1	4	7 10 0
A Blade Mill and Lang- ford's land	School Land	6	5	0	0	12 15 0
Tenement and five acres of land	Ditto	6	1	6	8	3 3 4
One close of land	Worcester-street	6	0	4	0	0 10 0
Two acres and two Butts of land	Foxhill	31 yrs lease with a fine of 20 marks	4s. & a hen	3	0	0
One acre of land	Ellorne Field					
Four acres of land	Leswell Field					
Two acres of land	School Land	6	0	12	0	0 13 4
Messuage, garden and backside		3 lives	3s. & a hen	2	0	0
Tenement	Worcester-street	6	0	10	0	2 0 0
Tenement and six acres of land	School Land	6	1	0	0	3 10 0
Marsh Ground	Ditto	6	0	3	4	0 10 0
Tenement	Mill-street	6	no rent		2	10 0
Shop	Behind shops	6	no rent		1	3 4
Four acres of land	Church fields	6	0	5	0	1 6 8

Premises.	Where situate or name.	Term of years.	Rent actually paid.		Rent that ought to have been paid; or Annual Value	
			£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Tenement	Bull-ring		} 1 6 8			
Half a stable, half piece waste land, and one acre of land	School Land	6				
Messuage	Church Hill	6	0	5 0	1 0 0	
Ditto	School Land	6	0	6 8	0 10 0	
Three acres of land	Ditto	6	0	10 0	1 0 0	
One barn, one close, and one acre of land	Ditto	6	14s. & a hen	1 0 0		
One barn, one close, and six acres of land	Ditto	6	22s. 8d. & a hen	2 0 0		
Twenty yards of land	Ditto	3 lives	2s. & a hen	1 0 0		
One barn	Ditto	6	0	8 0	0 13 4	
Fourteen yards of land	Ditto	6	2s. & a hen	1 0 0		
One barn and one acre of lane	Ditto	6	0	10 0	0 10 0	
Tenement	Church Hill		no rent		1 10 0	
Pasture ground	Chesterway		do.		chief rent of 8d.	
Tenement	Kidderminster		do.		do.	2d.
Messuage	High-street		do.		do.	1s. 0d.
Ditto	Worcester-street		do.		do.	6d.
Tenement	Mill-street		do.		do.	3d.
Pasture ground	Kidderminster		do.		do.	2d.
Tenement	Mill-street		do.		do.	3s. 4d.
Ditto	Behind shops		do.		do.	3s. 4d.
Barn and garden	Dattle Brooke		do.		do.	1s. 6d.
Tenement	Kidderminster		do.		do.	2½d.
Ditto	Ditto		do.		do.	1s. 8d.
Ditto and garden	Mill-street		6s. 8d.		£1	

List of fines levied and appropriated by the high bailiffs to their own uses instead of the school:

						£	s.	d.
John Radford, from M. Churchard	...	...	...	...	...	20	0	0
Ditto	„	J. Hassold	...	...	...	13	6	8
Ditto	„	Thomas Woodward	...	...	...	4	10	0
Ditto	...	...	...	...	...	1	9	0
John Dawkes	...	...	...	...	...	4	13	4



							£	s.	d.
John Pearsall	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	0	0
Henry Dawkes	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	0	0

The above is given not so much to shew the delinquencies of the various high bailiffs and feoffees who granted the leases, as to point out the properties belonging to the school and their relative values.

In the joint issue or plea of release by the tenants, it was decreed, where persons were poor and unable to pay their arrears of adjudged rents, that some allowances should be made; but where the high bailiff, John Radford, had spent twenty pounds of the school funds upon repairs of the church, he was adjudged to make it good again to the school.

After the foregoing facts of misletting to favourites and friends were proved, the Bishop, Chancellor, and jury decreed that the existing feoffees should be discharged for their misconduct; that the high bailiffs then living should refund the fines they had imposed on various tenants, and which they had put in their pockets instead of applying them to the benefit of the school; and that all the tenants or their executors should make good the full annual value of their takings for six years past; and also that the tenants who pleaded an excuse and thereby prolonged the trial, should pay all Pitt's expenses in opposing their pleas which were found to be inexcusable.

We now come to the third part, namely, the government of the school from that date. It is first of all ordered, "That no person nor persons should from thenceforth be admitted, elected, chosen, allowed, or approved of to be schoolmaster or schoolmasters of the free school in Kidderminster aforesaid, nor have "anie benefitt, profit, wages, or stipend belonging to the said school, or master, or masters of the same, but such person and persons as should wholie and altogether employ him and themselves as schoolmaster of the said schoole, and not employ him or themselves in any manner of other profession or business which might or should hinder or anie waie lett or take away the con-

tinual attendance and diligence, of such schoolmaster or schoolmasters upon the said schoole, and the schollers therein," and upon proof of their neglect of this rule it is provided that they be discharged.

Secondly, it is ordered that forty shillings per annum be reserved for books for the scholars; that the school be kept in repair; and the remainder of the funds then to be paid to the two masters; namely, two-thirds to the head master, and one-third to the second master.

Thirdly, it is ordered, that the high bailiff be the receiver of all the rents; and that every tenant do present him yearly with a hen for his trouble of such receiving; and that the high bailiff be a feoffee during the term of his office, by virtue thereof.

Fourthly, it is ordered that no lease be granted, nor schoolmaster elected, without the consent of the Lord Bishop or his Chancellor, the high bailiff of Kidderminster, and three of the borough and three of the foreign feoffees—that no lease exceed twenty-one years; the tenant to do all repairs and to be ejected if rent be not paid punctually; and all unfair leases granted by the existing feoffees, to be null and void.

Fifthly, it is specially provided that the masters be discharged, if they fail "In teaching and instructing the youth and schollers, coming to the said schoole to be taught and instructed, by using, exercisinge, or following anie other vocation, profession, or business."

Sixthly, the new feoffees are named: Montague, Earl of Newport; the Lord Bishop of Worcester; Sir Ralph Clare, Knight; J. Littleton, Esq; the High Bailiff of Kidderminster; Richard Pitt, Thomas Radford, Thomas Best, Symon Doelittle, Thomas Woodward, Symon Potter, Watham Dawkes, and Henry Dawkes, for the borough; H. Grove, William Glasbrooke, Thomas Burlton, John Corbyn, John Yarneton, G. Longmore, and William Butcher, for the foreign; and upon the death of all but six of them, it is decreed that the remaining six, "with the consent of the inhabitants of the said borough and foreign of Kidderminster," should elect others in the place of those

deceased; and it is also mentioned that instruction should be given only to the children and youth belonging to the parish of Kidderminster; and that it should consist of "good literature and learning;" and throughout the whole deed it is called the Free School of Kidderminster.

We must conclude, therefore, from the foregoing digest of this deed or verdict, that this school was to be a free one for the scholars, both in books and education; that the schoolmasters were to give their undivided attention to the scholars, or to be discharged; that the scholars were to be *the sons of parishioners*, and their number not limited; that no age at entering into, or leaving the school was stipulated; that no limit, either high or low, was specified as to the education they were to receive; that the feoffees were to be elected with the consent of the inhabitants of the parish; and, most important of all, that although full power was given to the feoffees to discharge the masters if there was cause,—to grant leases, and superintend not only governing the arrangements of the school, but its various properties—no such power was given them in this deed to dispose by sale or exchange, of any of the lands or tenements thereunto belonging.

I remain, with great respect,

Your fellow parishioner,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Mill-street, Kidderminster,

July 20th, 1848.

## CHAPTER XII.

Of all the trades that flourished of old,  
Before men knew reading and writing,  
The Giants' was the best I am told,  
For 'twas no use to try them at fighting ;  
Both rent and food free, they lived at their ease,  
They had neither to work nor to labour,  
They ate and drank whatever would please,  
For they forked all their prog from each neighbour.

CHARLES LEVER (*slightly altered*).

MAY FAIR at Bridgenorth was the great annual settling day for accounts due by the farmers to dealers, and therefore I regularly attended it. I always had some one to accompany me on that day, and we used to start at five o'clock. May-Day is generally fine: the hedges, the gardens, and the trees were all smiling, in fact were doing their very best to out-smile each other ; reminding us of the old song :—

"'Twas on the morn of sweet May Day,  
When nature painted all things gay,  
Taught birds to sing and lambs to play  
That gild the meadows fair,  
When Jockey early in the morn,  
Arose and tripped it o'er the lawn,  
His Sunday coat he had put on,  
For Jenny had vowed away to run  
With Jockey to the Fair."

Just so ; many a happy couple of rustic lads and lasses did we pass on May-Day Fair morning, trudging on with as light hearts as the larks trilling over their heads in the sky ; and doubtless, many were the matches made on such occasions,

without the least fear or the shadow of a doubt, as to the whole future of their lives being one perpetual May Day.

This was a Statute Fair; the "Molls and Johns" as the farm domestics and labourers were familiarly called, had a general holiday, whether they returned to their old situations or not.

Down every lane, on the right side and on the left, into the main turnpike road, they trooped in countless numbers with health on their cheeks, brilliant light in their eyes, and rich red pouting lips which seemed to say "Please, come kiss me." Jokes flew about followed by loud laughter, and every now and then a race took place on the road between the youths and girls, who were as loose in their limbs and frisky in their movements as were the gambolling lambs on the other sides of the hedges.

On May-Day I usually turned out of the new turnpike road at Shatterford gate, and took the old one for some four miles. My reason for so doing was because the old road being much higher than the new, gave us on fine mornings a much wider expanse of view, especially on the west side of the river Severn.

Immediately under us was Arley Castle and its beautiful grounds. There was the Parish Church too, close by, and a goodly number of snug farmers' residences scattered over the Arley Estate.\*

On the opposite side of the river bounding the whole scene were the "cloud-capped" Cleve Hills, and in the foreground Kinlet Park. Between our road and the opposite rising lands flowed the Severn, one of the five rivers that have their rise in Plinlimmon, and next in importance to the Thames.

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\* The Earl of Mountnorris had a great desire to sleep in the castle after its completion—it is said he did so only for two nights—he died in the year 1844, aged 74 years, he was born at Arley, and died there. The present owner of the castle and estate (Robert Woodward, Esq.) bought them on September 30th, 1852. He took possession of the estate on March 25th, 1853, and of the castle on July 4th, 1853. The park is grouped with very ancient oak, elm, sycamore, and chestnut trees. The pleasure ground called "Naboth's Vineyard" is planted with a great variety of rhododendrons, acacias, laurels, &c., and the Arboretum is filled with rare forest trees, evergreen oaks, copper beech trees, tulip trees, &c.

By-the-bye I was once at a harvest-home supper on the banks of the Severn—every sheaf had been carried in dry weather, every face from the owner down to the reaper was pleased at the completion of the work; the farmer himself had worked early and late, and his sons too, aye and even his two blooming daughters had lent a helping hand.

The master took the head of the table when the supper was laid, and I being the only stranger (and not having worked) was condemned to carve at the bottom as a punishment.

The quantity of meat and drink consumed was something incredible; there is no appetite like a farm labourer's, more especially at harvest time, and I believe that the rarity of getting good meat and good ale increases the appetite as much as the labour does, on these annual occasions. Every one of the farm labourers had done his duty, and as well comparatively as the highest man in the realm. It matters not in what grade a man stands; he can do his part, be he ever so humble, if he has the WILL, and if he does not do it he puts the machinery out of order. Do your best should be every man's motto.

"A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine:  
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,  
Makes that and th' action fine."

So said George Herbert, the poet, a brother of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, whose career is sketched at pages 168 to 178 of this book.

But I am diverging too much. My host wanted me to recite some one of my own sketches, or to sing a song in order to please the harvest men, and one of his daughters pressed me very much to do so. I never could repeat a verse off hand of my own compositions but I adopted, on this occasion, my old plan of scribbling a few verses on a sheet of paper, and then singing them. The farmer's daughter (the youngest) who had pressed me, felt that I had her in my eye in the composition, and her mother was so delighted that she placed two bottles of fine old wine, of her own making, before her husband and myself.

## THE GIRL OF SEVERN SIDE.

Sweet the voice of England's daughters,—  
Sweet an infant's lisping words,—  
Sweet the voice of falling waters,—  
Sweet the low of gathering herds,—  
Sweet the voice of peace returning,  
After war's relentless tide,—  
But the sweetest voice of any,  
Is the girl's of Severn side.

Sweet the smiles around encircling,  
When the wine in plenty flows;  
Sweet the voice of satisfaction,  
When we heal another's woes;  
Sweet the calm the storm succeeding,  
When we're toss'd on ocean wide;  
But the sweet all sweets exceeding  
Is the girl of Severn side.

Sweet the power of granting pleasure  
To the wretch that inly weeps;  
Sweet the gift of mental treasure,  
When the world's poor friendship sleeps;  
Sweet the ransom of the Negro,  
When the reign of slavery died;  
But the sweetest of all blessings,  
Is the girl of Severn side.

Here's a health to Britain's navy,  
Here's a health to Britain's arms:  
They can both perform their duty,  
When they're called by war's alarms;  
Here's a health to England's lasses,  
England's highest, richest, pride;  
Here's a health, fill up your glasses,  
To the girl of Severn side.

This is not quite a digression, as almost every one living on the borders of the Severn, from Shrewsbury to Stourport, on both sides of the river, go to Bridgenorth May Fair. The attendance is immense, and the travelling showmen, the merry-go-round proprietors, and the gingerbread dealers, always made a large

harvest, to say nothing of publicans of all grades, and sinners of all shades.

The early part of the morning was devoted to cattle dealing; at eleven o'clock the horse fair commenced; and at twelve the noisy showmen began to deafen the air, with noises more confusing than those of all creeds and denominations; intermixed with vociferous declarations, that the wild beasts were the wildest, the fat boy was the mildest, the wax works were the rarest, the Swiss lady the fairest, the plays were the truest, and the songs were the newest, ever brought before the notice of the discerning public of Bridgenorth.

Songs? yes, and of all kinds, from the great comique down to the melancholy poetical history and end of Dick Turpin.

But the greatest favourite of the whole with the rural uneducated Molls and Johns, was the song, or as it was more generally styled the carol of "Diverus and Lazarus." It took the lead, and sold much more rapidly than any other in the fair.

It was sung with a strong nasal effect by a short man with a repulsive countenance, and a tall female companion, who had but one eye!—the man always looked intently on the ground, as though it were going to give way beneath his feet, whilst his lady stared steadily with her one eye at the clouds.

The man introduced the carol thus—

[This here is about Diverus a rich  
mon wot lived on good wittles, and  
his clothes was purples and raiment,  
and about Lazarus a poor man wot  
died on starvation and ulcers.]

It was upon one day,—one day,—one day,—

That Lazarus sickened and died,

When the hangels carried him away,

In Abraham's bosom to hide,—to hide. (Ah.)

[The woman always sung this first  
verse by herself—the other verses  
were sung as a duet, excepting that  
the woman now and then from want  
of breath, or from habit, dropped a line  
—but she always came in at the close.]



Then Diverus he laid him down and down,  
And went as cold as lead,—as lead,—  
And for all he ow—ned—half the town,  
He died on his deathbed,—deathbed. (Ah.)

Now when he died, now when he died,  
He was buried on one day,—one day,—  
And for all his gold, and all his pride,  
He had to sleep in clay,—in clay. (Ah.)

[Here the woman addressed the crowd  
"Aye, aye, that's one comfort,—rich  
volk must die as well as poor,—buy,  
buy, only one halfpenny a piece."]

When Diverus was in the grave,—the grave  
His gold was no more nor lead,  
His life it could not save, not save,  
Nor bring him from the dead—the dead. (Ah.)

[The man then spoke, "We are all  
clay,—we are,—that's one comfort;—  
Buy, buy, only one halfpenny a piece,—  
rich volk can't take their gold with  
them that's one comfort,—Buy, buy,  
only one halfpenny a piece."]

Then when Diverus was forgot, forgot,  
Two hangels came that way,  
And stopping near unto that spot,  
To Diverus thus did say,—did say. (Ah.)

Rise up, rise up, brother Diverus,  
Rise up and come wi' we,  
For you must go deep down in hell,  
To sit upon a sarpint's knee. (Ah.)

[Then the woman said,—"Taint the  
poor folks as always goes there, that's  
one comfort.—Buy, buy, only one half-  
penny a piece."]

Then Diverus he saw Lazarus above  
The Hangels all among,—among,  
And cried brother Lazarus send in love,  
Some water for my tongue,—my tongue. (Ah.)

[Then the man said—"Rich volk  
dout drink nothink but wine here,—  
but they dout get no more on it nor  
poor volk when dead, that's one com-  
fort.—Buy, buy, only one halfpenny  
a piece."

But not none of the hangels dear,  
Could hear one word he said,—he said,—  
So love your neighbours while you're here,  
And you needn't moind being dead, being dead. (Ah.)

[Then there was a loud duet of "Buy  
buy, only one halfpenny a piece," and  
the crowd bought more eagerly and  
dispersed.

On our way home from the Fair, for the sake of variety we turned out of the turnpike road to the right, near Shatterford Gate, so as to visit Trimpley and the Giant's Grave. The first named is notable for containing the Tile-stone passage-beds, in which the remains of Pteraspidean fish and the limbs of our great fossil crustacean, the *Pterygotus*, have been found in large quantities.

Although there were only a few scattered houses here, a new church, or chapel as it was called, had been built in 1844. In ancient times a large park covered the neighbourhood, but that was quite gone; it must have been of great extent, as the Prior and Chapter of Worcester, in 1309, bound themselves in a bond for £110, payable to Sir Richard de Harley, for possession of it.

So far back as 1381, there was a chapel at Trimpley, dedicated to the Virgin, the gift of Sir John Attwood, and we passed by a large mansion, near thereto, of modern erection, bearing the name of Park Attwood, near whereunto doubtless he had once lived.

With regard to the ancient Attwood family (formerly called De Bosco) there is a legend narrated that at the time of the Crusades a member of it was taken captive by the Saracens, in the Holy Land, and being laden with chains and cast into prison he seemed to be at the point of death. A faithful dog was his only attendant. In this miserable condition he prayed that he

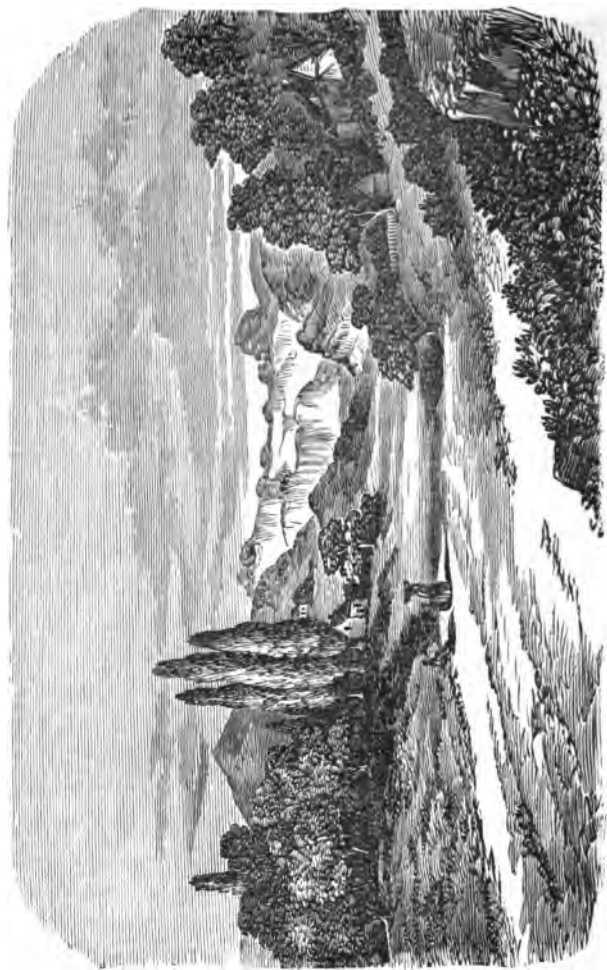
might be restored to his native country, and, the story goes, that he was miraculously conveyed to his ancestral mansion at Trimpley, his faithful dog with him, and they were found by an old domestic who lingered about the deserted halls. The master still bore his chains, and only arrived in time to lay his bones in the graves of his forefathers. Of course, as is usual in such cases, there is monumental evidence of this story in the chains which are said to be kept at Wolverley House, and in a sepulchral effigy of a Crusader with a dog at his feet, formerly in Wolverley Church, but now preserved in a private house in the neighbourhood.

We stopped and entered the chapel, at Trimpley, which we found was only 53 feet long, and 17 feet wide. The pulpit, reading desk, and font were all of the famous Alveley stone, and the church was built in imitation of Norman architecture.

We then drove on to the Giant's Grave, which lies in the heart of Habberley Valley, one of the most romantic spots in Worcestershire. The legend told about this giant, who was named Fingal, is, that upon returning home one very dark night, and having had rather more of "John Barleycorn" than was usual, he did not perceive that he was so near to Ridgestone Rock, which overhung the valley, at a height of some hundred feet, and so fell over and lost his life. It is said that he was too heavy to be moved, or even to be placed in a dug grave, so he was covered over with clay and rock, and his remains form the present huge mass that lies across the centre of the valley, and upon which the wild gorse has grown in great profusion, time out of mind.

Standing on the Ridgestone Rock, from whence he fell, we had a sight unequalled in this neighbourhood. The Malvern Hills, and the Cleve Hills and the Abberley Hills near Witley, stood up boldly in the southern and western distances, whilst Winterdyne, Blackstone Rock, and the Devil's Spade-ful on the right, and Kinver Edge and the Clent and Lickey Hills to the left, seemed to vie in completing one of our grandest English panoramas.

To make something like a legend as to the origin of the Giant's Grave, I wrote the following verses, and introduced, without any



**HABBERLEY VALLEY, NEAR KIDDERMINSTER.**

"One only favour now is all I ask—  
One only office now is all I crave :

Oh ! may some mortal do the humane task,  
To dig in sympathy the Giant's Grave."

authority, the statement as to the Giant having a Welsh castle for his residence, and that he had a lady in the castle, who had been detained there against her will for a long period. Any ladies held thus in thrall, we all know from the stories we have heard in our young days, have ever commanded the sympathies of the fairy race; and as in others, so in this case, they resolved to entrap the Giant, and then to rescue the lady. The Giant was, therefore, allured by mischievous Puck to the edge of Ridgestone Rock, and lost his balance and life. As to that part of the legend credited by most, that the Giant was "three sheets in the wind" I do not believe it, as in all my reading I never heard of a Giant so far forgetting himself.

THE GIANT.—This death is terrible, and yet 'twould be

Still more, if cast upon some dreary coast,  
Where rocks, resisting the enmadden'd sea,  
Stand frowning on some ship beneath them tost.

Here, though I feel I ever close mine eyes,  
With rapture e'en in death I look around;  
The hills, with verdure deck'd, that round me rise,  
Would fain persuade me 'tis enchanted ground.

Rich nodding trees, with proudly-waving arms,  
That rear in multitudes their heads on high,  
Display in varied forms their sev'ral charms,  
And lead from height to height the gladden'd eye.

Whilst all around rise summers perfumed flowers,  
Fanned by the zephyrs floating o'er their beds,  
And modest daisies skirt the sylvan bowers,  
Where "nodding violets" bend their graceful heads.

Doubtless, this is the spot where gay Queen Mab  
And Oberon her king, hold fairy court:  
Where Puck, Moth, Mustard-seed, and light Cobweb,  
With many a fairy elf, by night disport.

One only favour now is all I ask—

One only office now is all I crave:

Oh! may some mortal do the humane task,  
To dig in sympathy the Giant's Grave!

[Enter FAIRIES.]

PEAS BLOSSOM.—What brings this huge form  
Within our retreat?  
He surely deserves  
A punishment meet.  
Let's pinch him and pull him,  
Whilst firmly asleep;  
I wonder what brought him  
Where we our court keep!

MOTH.—Hold, hold—he is dead,  
He draws not a breath;  
See, too, his grey horse  
Has met with its death.  
So pinch not, nor pull him,  
In death he doth sleep;  
Queen Mab will be soon here,  
Her revels to keep.

[Enter PUCK.]

PUCK.—Ha! ha! is he here?  
He's caught in my net—  
No giant or tyrant  
E'er baffled me yet:  
I led him and drew him,  
Till over the rock,  
He easily met with  
His death in the shock.

[Enter QUEEN MAB.]

QUEEN MAB.—So let us with joy  
Our revels prepare,  
No longer detain  
The lady so fair.  
Hie! Puck to his castle,  
On Plynlmmon's height;  
Release the fair lady  
This very same night.

PUCK.—I go, swift as the lightning's light,  
Athwart the tempest-troubled night.

QUEEN MAE.—Now, hither bring his old grey horse,  
And lay it by his breathless corse;  
Whilst Moth his grave-clothes quickly weaves,  
Out of Trimpley's forest leaves;  
From Shutterford go fetch a stone  
To lay his heavy head upon,  
And from Black Wyre's forest soil  
Some trees around his corse to pile—  
Then from Franche's dry burnt land  
A heap of finely-sifted sand.  
Then lay above his heavy bones  
A heap of Warhill's puny stones,  
And o'er them all in haste throw on  
An Alveley huge red granite stone;—  
And thus the Giant's Grave we'll make  
Before the morning cock doth wake.

There is another piece of elevated ground, or rock, in the valley, which people say is the Giant's horse, who met with his death at the same time as the Giant; now, it is very doubtful whether any of the Giant race ever rode on a horse, but as such is the general belief in this case, I have just mentioned it in the verses.

Giants, I think, would not stoop, (I suppose I ought to say rise) to ride on horse-back, as they have always considered that horses were created for the ordinary pigmy-sized classes of mankind, whose short legs, (unless they were to do as that great hero, Jack the Giant Killer did, when he procured the seven-leagued boots) would not enable them to go a Giant like distance in a day.

Of the Habberley Giant, there is no record as to his having done anything great in his day; such, for instance, as the gigantic feat mentioned by Mariner, in his account of the Tonga Islands. He tells us that a Giant, finding his hook, with which he was fishing, entangled, snatched the line so violently, that he brought up the largest of those Islands from the bottom of the sea!

The Scotch giants too, are worth reading about, and excite our admiration; numerous traditions have been preserved about

them; one of the best of which, Hugh Miller relates as follows:—

“Prior to the invasion of Brutus, the Promontories of Cromarty (called the Souters), served as workstools to two Giants, who supplied their brethren with shoes and buskins. They wrought together, for being furnished with only one set of implements, they could not carry out their trade apart; and these, when needed, they used to fling to each other across the opening of the Firth, where the Promontories are *only* about two miles asunder.” From this, shoemakers were called Souters, and Burns’s ‘Souter Johnny,’ in Tam O’Shanter, being one of the craft, bore the name.

But as to the Habberley Giant, he was scarcely worth recording; indeed I should not have noticed him were it not for what Johnson said, “Tradition is a meteor, which, once it falls, cannot be rekindled.”

The Kidderminster Grammar School after the Midsummer Examination (June 25th, 1848) excited a good deal of interest, or rather disgust, chiefly on account of the boarders having carried away twenty-one prizes of the twenty-four awarded to the school boys; the town boys only getting three.

This amply proved the evils of the system, so far as the education of the parishioners’ sons went, and as to their number, they had dwindled down nearly two-thirds in five years, viz., from forty-eight in 1843, to seventeen at Midsummer, 1848.

I attended the Midsummer Examination, never having had an opportunity of seeing such a ceremony, here or elsewhere.

The Bishop was there, and of course the feoffees and masters were there also, and many of the inhabitants. There were the boarders and the day boys, the latter placed at the rear, not in the front as they ought to have been, as the real inheritors of the place. The speeches and the comments made during the awarding of the prizes were tolerably good, but no one except the Bishop mentioned the paucity of the scholars.

The school went on, and the town boys became fewer. In the beginning of October, I wrote and published another pamphlet, which to shew the facts of the whole matter, I think it well to



insert here. I addressed it as "An appeal to the tradesmen of the Parish of Kidderminster."

FELLOW TRADESMEN,—I conceive that no one can doubt or contradict the fact, that the Free Grammar School funds belong to this parish, and that they were intended solely for the benefit of the sons of parishioners.—This I satisfactorily set forth in the digest of the Inquisition of KING CHARLES I., which I published on the 20th of July last.

Before I took proceedings in the court of chancery, to enable me to appear, upon the late attempt to include the boarders in the benefit of the exhibitions to the universities, I availed myself of interviews with the most influential parties who differed with me as to the propriety of that attempt, in the hope that they would not persevere in it, but the only result was a full determination on their parts to carry out their intentions; and not only so, but the head master declared that he had the power (and would exercise it) of taking the whole of the Grammar School rents, and of devoting them to the purpose of founding exhibitions for his private pupils, leaving your sons out of the question.—This was a bold assertion, and I mention it thus early to shew that this partiality (to use the mildest word I can) has been at the root of everything transacted at, and since, the passing of the last feoffment: indeed you will see that an undeviating series of transactions to limit the number of your sons, and to increase the alien boarders, has been perseveringly adopted during the four years.

I took every means single-handed to defeat the boarders being included in the exhibitions—by protest, petition, and employing legal assistance, and—thanks to the decision of LORD COTTENHAM,—I was on the successful side. Since then I have made three applications to the feoffees for a copy of the last feoffment (for which I offered to pay) but not until the third application did I get a reply; the following being a copy:—

"Kidderminster, Oct. 4th, 1848.

Dear Sir,—Your letter was laid before the Feoffees of the Grammar School at their meeting this morning, applying for a

copy of their feoffment, and they unanimously declined to entertain such a proposition.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

. THOMAS HALLEN,

Clerk and Solicitor to the Feoffees."

Now why a parishioner who has and is endeavouring to protect the school funds for the parish, should be refused a copy of a public document, I cannot understand, except it be intended as an insult to those who agree with me, (and who I may safely say, comprise nine-tenths or more of the parishioners); or that there is something in the feoffment which will not bear investigation.

It would hardly seem credible that a body of men such as our feoffees are, would do so, but I believe there were but eight of them in attendance out of eighteen. So few being present might excite surprise in some minds, but several feoffees who have uniformly protested against the recent alterations have resolved never to attend again, from the disgust they feel at being overpowered. Had the whole number been present I know not even then whether I should have had it granted, because of the eighteen there are very few who feel personally interested in the welfare of the school, inasmuch as five are men whose families are grown up, five are bachelors, and two are non-residents, whilst of the remaining six the children of two of them are too young, and one sends his family to be educated at a distance; thus leaving but three whose interests agree with those of the whole body of parishioners.

Were the trustees elected as they used to be by the parish, doubtless, this evil would soon be corrected; we should then see annual statements of the school accounts; and the Mayor would, by virtue of his office, retain his power of feoffeeship. You are perhaps not aware that the feoffees are elected for life, but the mayor, holding an annual office, had the privilege of feoffeeship only during his mayoralty; thus even the opportunity of seeing the school documents through him has been cut off, by the mayor *now* being deprived of this privilege.

I wish it were known who concocted the last feoffment; whoever did it must not have had the welfare of the parishioners and their sons very much at heart! I am told it cost £700 to get it prepared and passed; or in other words the parishioners were mulcted in a cost of £700, out of their school funds, to prevent any more than forty of their sons being admitted into the school;—to make those forty pay about £6 per annum for what ought and used to be free;—to provide a noble house for the boarders to reside in;—and to build a school contiguous to it for their comfort. One feoffee says to me in a note,—“The school is founded for forty boys of the borough and foreign of Kidderminster, in default of applicants from any other place, these forty are the foundation.” This must be according to the last feoffment. The word *was* could not have been correctly used had he referred to the founder’s deed, as that says any or all the youths in Kidderminster should be educated, but referring to the feoffment he very properly used the word *is*.

Another feoffee tells me that the arrangement is forty boys at £1 per quarter, and that all above that number are to pay £2 per quarter, and that the one pound per quarter is an act of grace, as the feoffment stipulates £2 per quarter for all. Now, I am not prepared to say which is right, but I am prepared to say that *both* these plans are equally injurious to you. If the £2 per quarter for all above forty is right, it is a lock on the doors of the school, a *prohibitory tax* on the education of the sons of poor persons.

Before I leave this part of my subject I will say, that from the experience the feoffees have had of the evil working of this unfortunate feoffment, I believe they would not sanction it were it now reproduced for their signatures. But it is a sad reflection, that in this age of education, such a liberal deed as that of the founder should be displaced by such a niggardly feoffment.

The exchange of Greenhill estate of  $50\frac{1}{2}$  acres, for Woodfield House and  $11\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land has been a cause of supreme dissatisfaction to the parishioners. As to the relative value

of the two properties *in their present state* so far as £: s.: d. goes, there is nothing to complain of; Woodfield House, the school, and the land adjoining having cost about £6000, but as to the relative value of them *in utility and fairness* towards the parishioners and their sons, no explanation can be attempted which would satisfy any correct principle. To make this clear, I must first shew you what Woodfield and the school cost, from the beginning:—

	£	s.	d.
Purchase of Woodfield House and land .....	2825	0	0
Conveyance .....	73	15	0
Repairs .....	159	2	5
Walls .....	217	4	7
New bed room, banquetting hall,* &c., and } boarding school, }	750	0	0
New school room (say) .....	2000	0	0
	£6025	2	0

In the Greenhill farm we had  $50\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land within a few minutes' walk of the railway station, and adjoining two proprietors' estates, whose properties are very valuable. Now, what I contend for is this,—that every penny laid out after the purchase of Woodfield (the £2825) was for the sole benefit and convenience of the head master and his private pupils. The conveyance was to ratify that convenient exchange, the cost of repairs and walls was to make the residence of the private pupils comfortable; the bed rooms, &c., come under the same head, and I am satisfied the new school is also for the sole benefit of them and their master, and this I will now proceed to prove.

The only item in the foregoing list that there can be a shadow of doubt about is the new school room: but I shall shew, not only that it is not beneficial to the town boys, but that it is prejudicial to them. In the speech made by the head master on the 28th of June, he stated that "five years since the school business was carried on in a very small and wretched room *about one third* of the dimensions of the present building:" this was stated in the

\* At the sumptuous collation (*vide Ten Towns' Messenger, June 30th.*) it is stated that seventy persons sat down in this room. This must be a large room, but having been built for the boarders' use, can it be an equivalent for any of the land at Greenhill? What say the feoffees?

presence of his Diocesan, the Vicar, and a large assemblage of the inhabitants, many of whom had received their education in this "very small and wretched room." I was rather startled at the statement of the comparative dimensions of the two rooms; and find I had reason to be so, as the new room measures 59 feet in length, and 27 feet in width, and the old one  $54\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length, and  $24\frac{1}{2}$  feet in width,—a difference certainly not worth mentioning in a public speech.

The old school in fact is a very good one, and has no wall attached to it to separate the town boys from the boarders in their play hours. It also has the advantage of being very central for the town boys, whereas the new one is at an extreme end of the town up a steep hill, built for the convenience of the boarders, whose residence adjoins it, *this the memorable circular addressed to the boarders' parents will confirm*. Now, why should boys residing at such a distant place as Comberton Hill\* have to walk to and fro to Blakebrook, instead of Church-street, six times a day, to save the boarders walking from Blakebrook to Church-street? Is not this prejudicial to the town boys?

Have I not shewn that the old school is within  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length, and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet in width, of the old one? Have I not shewn that its situation is much more central? And you must also bear in mind, that if the new one cost £2000, the old one is quite as good for our purpose: therefore, I ask again, is not the new one prejudicial in every sense to the town boys?

But I must proceed to shew other ways by which the number of town boys are limited,—remember the boarders are not limited as to age, but the town boys are. In one case, the son of a tradesman happened to be three weeks under eight years of age when the quarterly admission came round, and he was rejected.† In

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\* Whilst these boys have to walk to and fro this great distance, the boarders having only a few yards to walk, can pursue their studies. The town boys to compete with them must sit up later, to say nothing of being exposed to all weathers in their long walks.

† A boarder can be received at any time during the quarter, but the town boys must wait for quarter day.

another case, a young man, who will one day shine as a scholar, and who was desirous of completing his studies at our school, was rejected because he was too old! Now, the deed of KING CHARLES mentions no age, and even if that or any other deed did prescribe the ages for admission, surely, rather than give deep cause of offence to neighbours, and drive the boys to other schools, these little differences of age should have been waived. But this is nothing to the fact of the parents (whose sons were lucky enough to be born at the right period, and who were in the school) being visited, and told not to send their boys any more unless they were intended for the professions; and numbers ceased to go!

We are told that charging £6 per annum for education and books makes the school select, but this is a very weak argument, as a sweep by paying, or getting that sum paid for his son, might send him. Again we are told there are schools that can afford education enough for a certain class of boys in the town; but I say the Free School was founded Free to all, and there ought to be no law adopted in it. It is a pity nature does not endow each human being with his quantum of learning at birth, as then these sliding-scale educationists would save themselves a great deal of anxiety on this nervous point.

Then again, the £1 per quarter is meant as a check on the number of town boys. Is this £1 per quarter for the firing, lighting, and cleaning the room? If so, why do not the boarders pay it? But are not the emoluments of the two masters liberal enough without this £1 per quarter? let us see:—

	£	s.	d.
The Head Master's Salary, I am told, is .....	240	0	0
Rent of Woodfield House, say* .....	100	0	0
Salary of Second Master, .....	120	0	0
Rent of Two Houses, .....	45	0	0

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\* He ought to pay the rates out of his profits from the boarders, as they must be heavy, and belong to the extensive accommodations for the boarders.—Does he do so?

Just £505 for educating sixteen town boys, with £4 per annum each in addition, making £35 per annum each for the *Free Boys* of Kidderminster, educated as Day Scholars, (!!!) whilst the boarders pay but Fifty Guineas for board, residence, washing, and education!! It will be said that although there are but sixteen town boys in the school now, they are bound to educate forty if they come.—True, but then they would get the £505; and is not that enough for educating forty boys, with an unlimited number of boarders, without charging us £4 per annum for each boy in addition, besides the cost of their books.

Most of my arguments are proved in the management of the Free Grammar School\* of Birmingham:—the School in New Street instructs 235 Classical and 215 Commercial Scholars, *without any quarterly charge*; the commercials are even taught Latin, French, and Drawing;—the head master is limited to eighteen, and the second master to twelve boarders;—there are eight Classical, two writing, one French, one mathematical, and one drawing master;—two boys go to Oxford or Cambridge one year, and three the next;—three examiners are paid to come down from these Universities to examine them by turns:—the successful boy must be in the first class.

I was much pleased to find, on my visit to that town, after midsummer, that the son of a widow was one of the successful exhibitioners. How gratifying must it have been to the feelings of the feoffees that she was so benefited; and how proud and grateful must she have felt at such a pleasing termination of her son's studies! The case is very different in Kidderminster.—There is a widow living in the Bull-ring, who, by her unassisted industry, has reared a family;—one of her sons was in our school when these obnoxious alterations took place;—she had been ill for some time, and hesitated, like many others, paying the £1, when first levied; the consequence was, that she received the following note, of which I hold the original.—“Mr. COCKIN will be much obliged by Mrs. HUMPHRIES informing him whether

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\* I perceive in the bill heads and circulars emanating from our school, the word “free” is now omitted.—This at any rate is consistent.

it is her intention to pay the sum due for her son's education and books, or whether it will be necessary for Mr. COCKIN to take steps for the recovery of the same.

Woodfield House,

March 17th, 1844.

To MRS. HUMPHRIES.

The widow paid, and took her son away in disgust; and instead of his being enabled to accomplish the objects of the son of the widow at Birmingham, he sought employment in a manufacturer's office. Need I say a word in comment on the contrast? "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers."

If it be objected here that I am personal, let me ask, are such facts to be suppressed from a false delicacy towards those who feel not for others? and, if facts can be called personal, let me ask, what that is which induces a schoolmaster to decline receiving a boy into his house as a boarder, because his father is a tradesman in the same town? Just look at the inconsistency of the position;—a person out of trade, worth, we will say, £300 per year, may send his son to a boarding school, no matter what his character; whilst a tradesman who, perhaps, pays £300 per week in wages, must not attempt to do so. Do I jest? No. Mr. COCKIN, in a note to me, dated the 22nd of July, 1847, says, as a reason for not taking my son as a boarder, "you will, I am sure, excuse my saying that the circumstance of your being *in business in the same town* will, I fear, operate prejudicially to your son amongst his companions." Now, tradesmen's sons from a distance are admissible, and so are professional men's sons on the spot, but a Kidderminster tradesman's son is abomination! Was not the school founded for all classes? What would become of the professionals if no tradesmen lived in the town.

In conclusion then, what do I propose. First, I remark that the last Feoffment must be cancelled, as no masters can be palatable to you who have to act under it, although they should avoid the unfortunate notions of the present head master; and in doing



away with it, I would say, insist upon the school being carried on by its old plan; and let the present premises at Woodfield to the head master at a fair rent, so that he and his boarders may remain—as our object is not formed from vindictive feelings, but to assert our rights. Then get two proper masters for our school. Let their salaries be liberal; curtail the length of the holidays; throw the school open to the whole parish; make no charge for books and education; and so fulfil the donor's will.

Unless this is done future feoffees may revive the exhibitions for the boarders, and there would ensue a continual town and gown struggle. Look not for a good result from parties who sought the boarders' benefit, in trying to send them to College for four years at the expense of our school; but enter into a general subscription to test your rights in Chancery. Mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers of every class, in Kidderminster, have an interest in doing so, especially as future residents will not endow a school where boarders participate.

As for myself, I have the pleasure of saying, that the parish is with me; and, if it will subscribe the expense, I will carry out, if possible, my propositions. I shall have three boys fit for the school next year, and £18 will be a heavy annual tax upon me where nothing ought to be charged, therefore, I feel interested in the struggle. I see, too, in Lewis's Topographical Dictionary, vol. 2, page 327, that our school has a right of the fellowships, in conjunction with five neighbouring towns, to Worcester College, Oxford, founded by SIR THOMAS COOKES, Bart. If so, this too must be recoverable.

If our opponents should be successful, I beg to remind them of a work called "The History of Sacrilege," where it is shewn that wrong possessors of church property never prospered; and, I believe, the mal-administrators of free school property never will.

It is remarkable that when the Commissioners published their report about our school, in 1832, they found great fault with some "trifling charges" then made by the lower master;—these are their words, "the small number of boys attending this school

would naturally excite a suspicion that it was not carefully attended to by the master. Some trifling charges made by the lower master, and the demand of payment in advance, have given offence to many individuals; and we think the trustees might usefully interfere in regulating these matters, and out of the funds now so ample, might pay not only for books, but also for the firing and the cleaning of the school. \* \* The words of the decree particularly require that no person should be elected master but such "as should wholly and altogether employ themselves as schoolmasters of the said school" \* \* the active interference of the trustees is imperatively called for, to place the school, *now so amply endowed*, upon a better foundation. The Bishop of Worcester ought to be consulted; and we trust the inhabitants of Kidderminster will soon feel and acknowledge the benefit derived from their exertions." If the small charges then made, (I am told a mere trifle) called for this reprimand, what would these commissioners say to the present system.

I have done my duty in this imperative case; I have laid the whole gist of the matter before you; I have proved it; it is for you now to subscribe and place the school on its proper footing. In the words of an eminent man, I will conclude by saying, "I have spoken freely, it is my habit; but I assure you that if a single word personally disrespectful has crept into this letter, it is wholly unintentional on my part. I have wished in all respects to feel due deference; but I have also wished to speak the truth, and to state facts;—the facts are created by others, they are not mine, I cannot alter nor disguise them."

I remain,

Fellow-Tradesmen,

Faithfully Yours,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Mill Street, Kidderminster,

October 9th, 1848.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"How often have I paused on every charm—  
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,  
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,  
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill;  
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,  
For talking age and whispering lovers made!"

GOLDSMITH.

The great political commotions on the continent during 1848, will be long remembered. Louis Philippe abdicated the French throne and came to England, never to return to his native country. There was an unusual amount of blustering talk in France about invading England, especially in the military circles, and many timid people in England became alarmed lest such an attempt should be made. To burlesque this I wrote the following verses, and gave them to one of the Town Councillors, who took delight in telling his nervous neighbours that the French were coming:—

In Eighteen Hundred and Forty-eight,  
When Louis Philippe did abdicate,  
The French, John Bull did subjugate,  
Whilst Peel stood quietly by.

They soon behaved like any invader,  
Placed on the throne Abd-el-Kader,  
Who sack'd all their corn, like any regrater,  
And chuckled, and winked each eye.

Throughout the land, both up and down,  
They burnt and pillaged every town,  
Till they reached "Kiddy" of great renown,  
Close to the Comberton Station.

The Mayor, and Corporation too,  
 Fell into a very nervous stew ;  
 They all exclaimed, " What shall we do ?  
 'Tis a horrid situation."

Their wits were put to a serious test,  
 They knew not what to do for the best,  
 They always thought the thing a jest,  
 But now they found it true.

At last up spoke sage Councillor Noggs,  
 " I think I can stop these Gallic dogs :  
 Suppose we cook the Caldwell frogs,  
 They're fond of frog ragout."

No sooner said than done,—they all  
 Ran down in haste to Caldwell Hall,  
 And netted the pool before nightfall,  
 And cooked a ton of frogs.

Next morn in grand costume, with loads  
 Of boiled and baked, both frogs and toads,  
 They sought the conquering French abodes,  
 Led on by Councillor Noggs.

The French, delighted, cried, " Mounseers  
 Of Carpet Town, we'll make you peers,—  
 Friend Noggs we dub King of Algiers ;  
 You're *vraiment gentil* dogs."

Then Noggs went off by special train,  
 Empowered in Algiers, King to reign ;  
 The French in " Kiddy " did remain,  
 The frogs were such a tie.

So long live mud, the father of frogs,  
 And long live Councillor (now King) Noggs,  
 For he saved us from the Gallic dogs,  
 Whilst Peel stood quietly by.

At this period I heard that Mr. Charles Cattell, of Mitton Mill, near Stourport, and Dowles Mill, near Bewdley, had resolved to give up the latter one, and having, myself, many

customers for flour, which I had to buy from various millers, I made a bargain with Mr. Cattell, and the landlady of the mill, Mrs. Tench, to take to the fixtures and the mill, as his successor.

This mill was about two miles beyond Bewdley, adjacent to the Far Forest. There was no turnpike road leading to it, and the wide lane used for a road was always in a horrible state. It combined steep hilly ground, and a soft soapy material, in which the cart wheels in wet weather became deeply imbedded.

Altogether the occupation was very useful to me in my corn trade. The premises included a house, an orchard of excellent apple and pear trees, and a good garden, the rent of the whole being only £45 per annum. It was a charity property, the rents being distributed to the poor of Bewdley in small sums, annually, on a fixed day.\*

On my journeys to Ludlow and Cleobury markets I called at the mill each Monday and Wednesday, to see the miller, and copy the deliveries and receipts; this mill management was the pleasantest part of my trade. The mill-pool was well supplied with fish, and the grass and fruit of the orchard sometimes paid half the rent of the whole occupation, and the accommodation to me just then, in getting corn ground for feeding purposes, was of great service.

Just at this period a great commotion took place at Shrewsbury as to the Free Grammar School there. The miller that worked my mill was a Shrewsbury man, and he handed me a pamphlet that had been sent to him upon the question of the school funds being made a better use of. This pamphlet was written by some person signing himself "A Churchman," and was entitled "A Plea for Restitution addressed to the Trustees of Shrewsbury

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\* Mr. Bryce, the sub-commissioner, in his report (Schools Inquiry Commission, vol. 15 published in 1869), says that the mill and meadow charity money, amounted to about £100 per annum, which was distributed in sums of 2s. to 8s. 9d. to those who applied for it, among whom were many persons far above poverty. At the last distribution there were 1,300 applicants, that is, one fourth part of the whole population of Bewdley. He recommended this money to be transferred to the uses of the Grammar School.

School." It was printed by John Davies, at Shrewsbury, and bore the date of August, 1848.

In this pamphlet, the writer states, that the revenues of the school exceeded the outlay; that originally the school was endowed with *all* the tithes of the parish of Chirbury, and great part of the tithes of the parish of St. Chad in Shrewsbury, and that in 1846 they amounted to £2,850. Out of this revenue there had been paid to four Clergymen (as ordered by the foundation deed) £530, viz. :—

	£	s.	d.
The Incumbent of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury .....	200	0	0
The Curate of Clive .....	45	0	0
The Curate of Astley.....	30	0	0
The Vicar of Chirbury and his Curate .....	255	0	0
	530	0	0

He, therefore, recommended the School Trustees to dispose of the surplus in two ways : first, to give part to the Incumbents of St. Mary's and St. Chad's for the purposes of affording relief to the poor, and, secondly, to devote the remainder to establishing schools for poor children in those parishes.

Of these just and politic propositions no notice was taken; the surplus was paid to the masters, who, as will be seen hereafter in the correspondence between Dr. Kennedy, the Head Master, and myself, in the year 1860, took all the surplus, and instead of teaching Shropshire boys, especially the sons of Shrewsbury burgesses, free of cost, devoted himself (with assistants) to the education of rich men's sons, from all parts of the United Kingdom, for which he was handsomely paid by the parents, and not satisfied therewith, charged the Shrewsbury boys, who ought to have been taught free; heavy fees also.

In the midst of my business at Kidderminster and Dowles, and the turmoil of the Grammar School question, I did not altogether forget mental enjoyments. I have at page 129 just mentioned Quatford Castle, (which commanded the village of that name.) With the future heiress of this castle and its grounds, I, at this period, became acquainted. Her mother kept the only

shop for groceries and provisions in the village, and as her daughter Miss Mary Beddoe used to go to Bridgenorth market on most Saturdays, to make purchases, I had the pleasure of her going with me, in my gig, on many a market day. Quatford was only about one and a half miles from the "High Town" of Bridgenorth, but short as the distance was, the conversations between us were very pleasant, and I can sincerely say, that I never met with any person, more accurately acquainted with our general literature, than Miss Beddoe. Her uncle was the owner of Quatford Castle, to whom on one of my journeys she introduced me. He too had read much, and written on many topics, and was possessed of a good library.

He had risen in life by his indomitable industry. His father was the owner of some stone quarries, and he used to send his son out, periodically, to collect the accounts due to him. In these journeys he had to pass through Quatford, and from the first, felt a desire to live there. This came to pass in due course of time.

At the period that he first resided at Quatford, there were but a few cottages in the place; these were inhabited by indifferent characters, as may be inferred from the fact, that upon their dislodgement, the grounds around their dwellings were found to be plentifully sown with sheep-skins, doubtless the most profitable branch of their poaching perambulations.

In the midst of this rude state of things, Mr. Smalman settled here as a builder, in which he became very prosperous, and was enabled, thereby, to give employment to a large number of workmen for many years. In the years 1829 and 1830 he accomplished the erection of his castle. The ground upon which it stands, was at that time a waste, called Morfe Common, but the situation was grand.

The building trade did not engross the whole of his attention; he had a great taste, or rather a passion for growing roses, and when I first had the gratification of visiting him, there were no less than five hundred varieties growing in the grounds, immediately behind the castle.

The castle stands on a natural mound, upwards of one hundred feet high, and is surrounded by groves of oak, beech, birch, fir, and chestnut. These the proprietor planted with his own hands, at different periods, so as to give a variety in age as well as foliage. On the roof of the castle there was a promenade, beautifully laid out, from which could be seen, in the distance, the towers or steeples of nine parish churches, the Clee Hills and the Wrekin, whilst to the north and south of the castle stretched many beautiful valleys, in the midst of which the Severn rolled proudly along. There were seats placed on this promenade, commanding views of prominent objects, and when the trees were in full foliage, squares were cut in the branches, in order that the spectators should see the objects perfectly.

But whatever praise was due to Mr. Smalman, for his energy and taste, as displayed in the erection of the castle, and the laying out the grounds, he deserved still more, for erecting and planting a thriving village of well employed people, close to them. In the first case he combined comfort with luxury for himself, whilst in the latter he learnt the "luxury of doing good" to others.

In connection with the castle, were many objects of interest, viz.:—the Parish Church; an ancient Chantry; a spot called the Danish Camp, from the Danes having encamped there during their flight from Alfred; and a modern Belvidere, which, although occupying but one quarter of an acre of ground, stands on an abrupt rocky eminence, 70 feet high.

During the excavation of a trench the following articles were found, and deposited in the castle:—a silver coin of Henry I., a silver gilt ring, a Norman spear spur, a horse-shoe and pieces of horse-shoes, a nut-hook, a whetstone, pieces of the antlers of the red deer and roe-buck, with quantities of bones of cattle and other animals, and tusks of the wild boar.

Quatford is a manor and a parish, and Leland tells us it was the manor place of Roger de Montgomery, who built the church;—his second wife, Adeliza, it seems was in a fearful storm on a voyage from Normandy to England, and in her alarm vowed



that if she escaped she would build a church in honor of St. Mary Magdalene, on whatever spot she first met her husband. The vessel got safe to port, and she met her husband at his hunting seat, near where the present parish church now stands, and in accordance with her pious vow, he caused it to be erected. It was consecrated in the presence of three Bishops in 1086, and had an endowment for a Dean and five Canons.

Bridgenorth has been often cited for Quatford, and facts which, took place 200 years before Bridgenorth was in existence, have been attributed to it. This need not be wondered at when we find that the translator of the Saxon Chronicle originated it, by rendering the word Quatbriege, or Briege, *Bridgenorth*. The original name of Quatford was "Quatbriege," or "Briege," a bridge having been thrown across the river, for the use of the inhabitants, and the name of Bridgenorth was given to the present town of that name to distinguish it from the bridge at Quatford, which stood south of it, and by the Welsh, Bridgenorth is still called North-bridge.

The eminent historians of Shrewsbury, Owen and Blakeway in their elaborate work upon the town and county of Salop., (vol. 1, pp. 20, &c.) inform us that Alfred granted Mercia, about the year 884, to his son-in-law Ethered; on the death of this nobleman, in 912, his widow, Ethelfleda, Alfred's daughter, succeeded to the government of Mercia, but with a territory considerably diminished, as her brother, King Edward, deprived her of London and Oxford, and no doubt of the intervening country. The Lady of the Mercians thus restricted to the western district of the kingdom, once ruled by her husband, devoted much of her time to Shropshire, whither she was frequently called by her hostilities against the Welch. She built castles at Chirbury and Brugge (*i.e.* Quatford), near Bridgenorth.

The Norman invasion (A.D. 1066) brought with it a total revolution throughout England. At this period Mercia and Shropshire were possessed by Edwin (son of Aljar, and grandson of the celebrated Godiva), who was as much beloved by the Normans as the English; of which there could not be a greater proof than that of the Conqueror's weeping when he heard of

his death (although he had rebelled against him), and banishing the parties from his presence who brought Edwin's head to him.

After him a Saxon Thane, called Eddic the Forester, in conjunction with Bleddyn ab Cynfyn, and Riwallen, the Prince of Powis, took up arms against the Conqueror, but retired before his generals arrived at Shrewsbury, after they had cowardly set fire to the town. To put an end to these rebellions in so distant a part of the kingdom, he, in 1070, conferred Shrewsbury and Shropshire upon his cousin, Roger de Montgomery. Upon this occasion he was created Earl of Shrewsbury.

This Roger, whilst residing at Shrewsbury, made Quatford his hunting seat. Of the 406 manors contained in the county (one of which was Quatford), he held in his own right all but 49; they contained 15,640 acres in his actual occupation, whilst he granted 25,560 acres to his villeins, on condition of their tilling the part occupied by himself.

Holding at the same time the Earldoms of Arundel and Chichester, he placed the government of Shrewsbury in the hands of Warin the Bald, the husband of his niece, and that of the county in the hands of William (surnamed Pantulf) Picold, Corbat, and his sons Roger and Rodbert, and other faithful and valiant men. Roger de Montgomery was the builder, or rather the enlarger of Shrewsbury Castle. His wife was Mabil, daughter of William de Belesme; she was notorious for her combined powers of meanness, cunning, loquacity, and cruelty. Her son Robert, called after his maternal ancestry, De Belesme, partook of her disposition, and joined the Conqueror's eldest son when he revolted against his father.

Upon the Conqueror's death, he (Robert) also supported the Duke's (his eldest son's) claim against that of William Rufus; and here we find that Roger, his father, actually besieged his own son in favor of Rufus, in Rochester Castle, A.D. 1088.

Afterwards we find this Robert de Belesme, accompanied by Prince Henry, (Henry I.) visiting Normandy, and the very man he had twice taken up arms for (the Conqueror's eldest son) seized them both and threw them into prison; this caused Roger,

the father, to follow and garrison all his fortresses against the Duke; which led to a war of extermination on both sides. This was only put an end to by Roger proposing terms of pacification, including the release of his son Robert.

Roger died six years after the Conqueror, and was buried at the new church which he had founded at Shrewsbury. His wife Mabil, whilst sleeping on a couch, was murdered by one Hugh and his three brothers, from whom she had taken a castle unjustly. After her death he married Adelais, the daughter of Ebrard de Pusay, (a great French noble) by whom he had one son Ebrard, chaplain to William Rufus, and Henry I: she was very religious and a great benefactor of the poor. The chief murderer of Mabil, above named, fled to Palestine where he lived for twenty years; he joined the Crusaders when they besieged Jerusalem, proving himself of great service to them from the knowledge he possessed of the country, and the manners of the inhabitants.

The Norman custom of primogeniture brought the Norman estates to Robert, his eldest son, whilst his English possessions fell to the second son Hugh.

The third Earl of Shrewsbury was another son of the first Earl, and named Robert de Belesme. He it was who *removed the town of Quatford and its inhabitants* to Bridgenorth, and built the Castle of that town, then called Bruges, and from that date to the recent erection by Mr. Smalman, Quatford had been without a Castle.

From my having visited Quatford Castle, and received the hospitalities of its owner, I thought a poetical sketch of what Quatford had been, and then was, would afford him some gratification; and not only so, but as I had seen some of his own compositions, which were very good, I felt that he would appreciate my composition the more. I, therefore, wrote the "English Village," and after submitting the manuscript to him, and also to his niece, who gave me many of the historical facts as narrated above, it was published with their consent.

## THE ENGLISH VILLAGE;

AN OLD MAN'S TALE OF

THE CASTLE OF QUATFORD.

*(Mostly founded on fact).*

## DEDICATION.

TO JOHN SMALMAN, ESQ.,

QUATFORD CASTLE,

SHROPSHIRE.

DEAR SIR,

I have often read dedications addressed by Authors to persons of Title, which in too many instances, were but intended to attract the notice of the Public to the contents of the works to which they were prefixed.

I see no reason for such pandering to hereditary names, and should wish all such weaknesses to meet with the rebuke they deserve,—viz.: the indifference of the persons to whom they are addressed.

In the present case, I feel satisfied as a Tradesman in dedicating this little Work to you, knowing that my imperfect performance will be indulgently received, from the knowledge you have of the difficulties encountered by a writer, who has, at the same time, a business to attend to.

Every man has his hobby, and scribbling is mine—the harmlessness of it is the only apology I can make for intruding on you thus.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Faithfully Yours,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

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Nor of "Deserted Villages" I sing,  
 Nor over ruin hang with weary wing;  
 Such scenes were his whose magic pencil shows,  
 "Sweet Auburn" midst its desolating woes.  
 Sad train of ills! to see the sweet estate  
 Of village life destroyed by adverse fate,—

To gaze upon the slow yet sure decay  
Of spots which once were ever green and gay,—  
To watch the cankering moss steal up each wall,  
And inch by inch the frame-work rot and fall,—  
To see foul reptiles haunt the maiden's bower  
Where with her favorite book full many an hour  
She spent,—or, with the thrifty needle plied,  
And garments for the sick and poor supplied,—  
To find the school where learning held its sway,  
Crumbling to pieces midst the general prey ;  
And worst of all,—to see the Ancient Pile,  
The proudest landmark of that favored isle !  
Where generations, long since with the dead,  
Were with the Gospel treasures daily fed,  
The prey of weeds, infectious, rank and strong,  
Which darken e'en the windows with their throng,  
Run tortuous through each crevice in the wall,  
And blight its sacred relics with their pall.—  
No, not by scenes, which add distress to thought,  
Give birth to sadness, or with grief are fraught,  
Is my strain marred, no! mine's a brighter theme,  
One of those triumphs which usurp the dream,  
That wakes, with trumpet tongue, earth's slumbering host,  
To witness deeds that form true talent's boast !

See yon old man, whose hairs are silvery grey,  
Whose failing strength just holds him on life's way,  
With shoulders bent, he scarce can lift his eye  
To view the sun that governs in the sky,  
But leaning on his stick, his long tried friend,  
Anon he rests, anon doth onward wend.  
When youth was his, that eye and stalwart form  
Feared neither man nor spirit, heat nor storm ;  
His occupation sprung from out the soil,  
Robust, he cared not for the heaviest toil ;  
From earliest dawn he laboured with the sun,  
Nor cared for ease until its course was run ;  
Each night returned with sweet repast and rest,  
Each morning's labor brought a fresher zest.  
Thus youth and manhood passed midst pleasant days,  
For health, with priceless gifts, such life repays !



**QUATFORD CASTLE, NEAR BRIDGENORTH.**

He paused, and pointed to the eastern sky, | Looking in pride upon the vale below,  
And said—You see yon castle strong and high, | Where Severn through enamelled meads doth flow.

But age must come, and spite of all man's cares,  
It saps each tree, nor health, nor vigour spares,  
The limbs refuse their proper parts to fill,  
The eyes rebel against the wish and will,  
The faltering tongue, the trembling hands foreshew  
That soon life's hopes must close to him below ;  
Yet eager to the last he hastes along,  
To watch the gambols of the School-house throng,  
As daily at the wished-for hour they troop  
Forth from their studies with tumultuous whoop.  
Nor happier is the King of Albion's isle  
Than that old man, when sitting on the stile  
With chattering young ones clinging to his knee  
Telling their various joys with childish glee,  
Or asking tales from him, of Kings of Yore,  
Or dreadful Dragon guarding Castle door  
Where Ladies fair were locked, till some bright fay  
Or fairy came, and charmed them safe away ;  
Or of the wondrous Jack that Giants slew,  
Or of that frightful man, with Beard of Blue !  
Nor could he e'er refuse, for age is kind,  
And loves to please the just emerging mind,  
Whilst the young listeners wondered at his store,  
Surprised one tongue should tell such endless lore !  
One evening when the sun had well-nigh set,  
And round him stood each favorite chubby pet,  
Begging as was their wont, for only one,  
Just one more tale before he would begone.

He paused, and pointed to the eastern sky,  
And said—

“ You see yon Castle strong and high,  
Looking in pride upon the vale below,  
Where Severn through enamelled meads doth flow,  
Around it myriad Roses thickly spring  
In lengthened avenue and fairy ring,  
As though 'twere Nature's first and favorite bower  
Raised by her mandate in some joyful hour ;  
Here, in past times, was spread a barren moor,  
A hopeless waste, shunned both by rich and poor,  
With not a blade to bless the aching sight,  
Cursed it was said by an enduring blight ;

"And thus for many centuries it lay  
A sad memento of unchecked decay.  
Oft when the heat of day was past and gone,  
And evening in her summer glories shone,  
I've wandered there to count those golden lines  
That Sol throws round the world ere he declines ;  
But not alone, for there a youth I've met  
Who shunned me as the bird avoids the net ;  
Studious he seemed, and wrapt in solemn mood,  
His mind had some high project for its food ;  
Anon he'd stretch him on the burning sand,  
Anon look round in pity on the land,  
Muttering about proud Castles and green fields  
That fair Italia to her children yields ;  
And frequent on his knees in rapture vowed,  
That if by Providence with health endowed,  
If Fortune smiled on his unfriended lot,  
A Castle fair should stand on that same spot,  
With sylvan grottoes, fountains, and bright flowers,  
Cool streams, smooth avenues, and fairy bowers.

Years passed,—from youth to manhood sprung the boy,  
Still full of plans and hopes of earthly joy ;  
With visions of ambition bold and high  
And boundless as the framework of the sky ;  
Yet sigh'd he for an object that would feel  
His woe, her woe,—his daily weal, her weal ;  
For man but feels a sympathetic part,  
If he would win, he must unlock his heart,  
Not in the cold or sensual mode which moves  
The selfish soul that gold or fashion loves,  
But giving as receiving, love for worth,  
And faithful as the compass to the north.  
Oh ! what such sweet sensations can impart  
As Love ! when inmate of a virtuous heart ;  
Lost to all else that sense or passion brings,  
To one absorbing hope alone it clings,  
Nor sees, nor hears, the busy world around,  
But breathes heaven's air, treads consecrated ground,  
Moves in a sphere essentially its own,  
And feels most busy when left all alone !



" And soon his hopes, whose joys engross my tale,  
Were blest by troth to Ellen of the Vale ;  
In her the Graces' fairest features shone,  
And virgin Innocence preserved her throne ;  
Blest with her love, his toil was so much joy,  
For love returned, is labor's best alloy ;  
Success, too, smiled on his untiring zeal,  
And Fortune turned for him her lucky wheel.  
Hours, Seasons, Years, flew past on gladsome wing,  
And life to him was one perpetual spring.  
Nor sought he praise from adulation's train,  
For praise with him was not the aim of gain,  
But, step by step, Improvement's thread he spun,  
Till the proud goal of self-reward he won.

Lo ! where once stretched a sunburnt bladeless moor,  
Where pale starvation waited on the poor,  
Now see a busy Village spread around,  
With happy industry and plenty crowned ;  
The roadside Inn stands foremost in the van,  
Well stered with " nut-brown " ale for thirsty man ;  
The Grocer's Shop with canisters bedight,  
The Smithy with its clang, and flashing light ;  
The Builder's yard, filled with its human bees,  
Bestrewed with shavings, planks, and fresh-hewn trees ;  
The Labourer's Cottage, where across the door,  
He looks in pride upon his humble store ;  
These and the numerous blessings that belong  
To enterprise, around the Village throng,  
And fill with honest heart-felt pride, the mind  
That in one wreath, health, wealth, and toil entwined."

Happy the man who lives a Village life,  
His wants are few, his days devoid of strife,  
Far from the clap-traps that in crowds allure,  
Which in their end, but guilt and pain procure.  
Why should the rich, who swell the bloated Town,  
Look on pure Village life with haughty frown ?  
Yet shut their eyes on Town begotten vice,  
On blushless evils bought and sold by price ;  
On life devoted to amass mere pelf,  
On sordid wealth that lives but for itself ;

On pale-faced thousands toiling for their bread  
From infant years, till gathered to the dead ;  
On innocence by affluence hunted down,  
And every curse that haunts the fetid Town !

Say what the gift, the crown, that falls to those  
Who midst increasing wealth and vice repose,  
Who count up hoard on hoard of rotten wealth  
Amassed from fellow mortal's loss of health ;  
Each hoard the fruit of human toil and pain,  
The poor man's sorrow ! and the rich man's gain !  
Behold yon mansion, stately, high, and proud  
Behold yon factory, and its sickly crowd ;  
Look at that drawing room, its sumptuous pride,  
Look at those huts where filthy crowds reside ;  
See that rich garden of exotic trees,  
See that poor alley, shut e'en from the breeze ?  
That mansion owes its birth, and all its pride,  
To those who in yon alley's filth abide,  
Those trees were planted in that cultured soil  
By their decrepid children's daily toil,  
And all its beauty, comfort, grandeur, rise  
From burning tears, and congregated sighs !—  
But here, the poor and rich alike are blest  
With nature's breezes and refreshing rest,  
Pleasures that pall not, joys that never cloy,  
Health, peace, and happiness without alloy ;  
Which if to market taken, Towns would buy,  
And watch 'neath lock and key with miser eye !

Ah ! no, the town boasts not of healthful dales,  
Of vigour giving hills, and scented vales,  
Clear skies, pure air, sweet streams, and wild-born flowers,  
The country's calm retreats, and happy bowers ;  
But bears the mark of man's uncertain hand,  
Whilst nature proves that God her features planned.  
Was it e'er told by tongue or Poet's page,  
Of men that sought the Town in failing age ;  
Of longing hopes to pace the pent up street,  
Where aged vice and youthful langour meet ?  
Oh ! no, the world-sick sons of age and care,  
In life's decline, to nature's bowers repair,

To tread once more those sylvan scenes of youth,  
Those long lost scenes of innocence and truth,  
And where they sung their first taught simple lays,  
They hymn life's last declining songs of praise:

Oh, rapturous change! a second Paradise  
Those country haunts, to him who commerce flies.  
Sweet are the tears that wet the furrowed cheeks,  
When the full heart to fond remembrance speaks,  
As on the eye some once lov'd prospect breaks!  
The village spire, with spirit soothing peal,  
The noisy mill, the stream that feeds its wheel,  
The Priest's trim garden and recluse abode,  
The lonely turnpike, guarding the dull road,  
The Village tree, that spreads its boughs around,  
And boasts the root that first struck in that ground,  
With harmless memories cling around us still,  
And lead th' affections captive at their will!

But shall my pen forget its brightest task,  
Shall Piety from it a tablet ask?  
Ah! no, she needs not such a feeble aid,  
She stands erect in brightest robes arrayed;  
Her acts and faith, by each and all confessed,  
Creating praise, e'en in the Sceptic's breast;  
Spreading her wings around that sacred dome  
The Church!—her cradle, and her final home!

See where the Norman pile with modest head,  
On yon high hill, stands guarded by its dead,  
The dead, who loved its solemn aisles in life,  
Happy, that there they 'scaped the world's rude strife.  
Oh! say how many groans, how many sighs,  
How many aching hearts, and weeping eyes,  
Have here a final farewell heart-throb given  
To cherished friends received by gracious Heaven.  
The widow here at eve her visit pays,  
And fain the husband's lifeless form would raise;  
The lonely orphan steals at morn to weep,  
Above the grave, where his fond parents sleep;  
The Father too, bereft of both his boys,  
Who in his hopes foreshadowed many joys,

Loves here to drop a Parent's sacred tears,  
Whose lustre pales creation's brightest spheres.  
Here, too, the lover o'er the maiden's tomb,  
In broken accents mourns her early doom;  
With grief-fraught heart reproves the greedy grave,  
And with loud voice for instant death doth crave.

And who is he that passes through yon gates,  
Who every evening on her manes waits;  
Who though disjoined by death, his love still owns,  
And pays the solemn tribute of his groans?  
'Tis he that built the Castle on the moor,  
Who fondly dreamt of blissful years in store,  
Doated on his First Love whilst life was young,  
And doats on still amidst the world's rude throng,  
Still sees, still follows, with enchanted eyes,  
The long lost form that in the cold grave lies.  
Ah me! and why if grief so fills his breast,  
Seeks he not foreign scenes to bring him rest?  
Why not in fresh-blown novelties go drown  
The heavy load that weighs his spirits down?  
Why seek not for another breast to share  
His pent-up grief, his overwhelming care?  
Ah why! because to her his faith was bound,  
Like unto her none e'er on earth he found,  
And lives upon the hope when life is o'er,  
To join her spirit on that peaceful shore  
Where heavenly love resides in all the blest,  
And bliss the brightest finds an endless rest!

But though his ardent yearnings meet not here  
The sacred object to his soul most dear,  
He shuts not up his heart to others' wants,  
But from his store a well-timed solace grants:  
Nor calculation damps the warm desire,  
That fills his breast with charitable fire,  
But blessed with plenty, grants a generous gift,  
And from despair's dark gulph the poor doth lift!  
For like Heaven's rain when drought the plain pervades,  
And life seems barren, lo! a thousand blades  
And countless blossoms, whose perfumes arise,  
And fill with grateful incense, the broad skies!

So the free hand the liberal heart obeys,  
Cheering poor poverty's deserted ways,  
Scattering the flowers of charity around,  
And turning sterile into grateful ground.

Thus day by day he heals up others' woes,  
Thus day by day around the village goes,  
Visits the sick and banishes their fears,  
And both by word and deed their sorrow cheers;  
Rewards with many tokens honest toil,  
That never ceasing tills its native soil;  
And opportunely fosters native zeal  
In those who untaught talent oft reveal;  
Feels boyhood's dreams of emulation rise,  
When doling out the book as merit's prize;  
Mixes with joy at harvest-home rude dance,  
And shares the bliss of rustic maiden's glance;  
Drinks pleasant hopes when round the bowl is past,  
And pledges health as life's supreme repast,  
Smiles with the joyful—weeps with the distressed,  
And thanks his God that all is for the best!  
Nor slights he those who sneer at his good deeds,  
But in their ignorance such failing reads.  
Looks o'er their faults, or blames the past dark times,  
That crippled learning and encouraged crimes,  
Nor thinks to find true feelings rule the heart,  
Where knowledge of man's duties holds no part.

And midst these deeds of daily, hourly good,  
Finds he no time for thought or mental food?  
Ah! yes, the heart that throws its gifts around,  
Contains a treasure elsewhere rarely found!  
Which when life's labors shall for ever close,  
Will the pure pleasures of that heart disclose.  
Oft from the world withdrawn, alone, unseen,  
How deep the joy! how great the bliss hath been!  
When the mind's eye through fields of poesy,  
Wanders unchecked in boundless extacy!  
'Tis then the Power that placed us here on earth,  
Gives us a token of our heavenly birth,  
Leads us through mimic fields of Paradise,  
Which in the visions of true Genius rise,

Opens bright scenes to th' enraptured mind,  
And placid streams of thought, long felt, unbind!—

And, oh! how sweet at evening's hour to pore,  
O'er some majestic page of poet's lore;  
Or trace the manners of our Fathers' times,  
In drama, essay, or enchanting rhymes:  
With Cowper, shun the world's unmeaning throng;  
With Shenstone, sing the simple pastoral song;  
With Crabbe, explore the dwellings of the poor;  
Or softly sigh with love's disciple, Moore;  
Travel through feeling's unconfined domains,  
Where Byron, mighty master! matchless reigns!  
Studious with Thomson nature's paths explore;  
Or with sweet Burns at life's stern shrine adore;  
Devotion's lessons learn from Wordsworth's page;  
From Southey's pencil catch the living age;  
In Shakespeare, learn what human hearts can prove  
Existent in Ambition, Hate, or Love;  
With Milton shudder at Heaven's rebel powers,  
Or sadly weep o'er Eden's long lost bowers,  
Transfixed with feelings mixed with fear and shame,  
That man and angels both should fall the same!  
How great that double fall—let their despair  
And deep despondency, alas! declare.

Yes, these the stores, the mines of wealth that Mind  
And Genius offer to instruct mankind,  
Oh! rapturous teachers, void of worldly aim,  
Would that our life's research was all the same,  
That distant from the world's unceasing strife,  
Peaceful we paced the silent paths of life,  
And with a chaste simplicity combine  
The man's right duties with his hopes divine,  
Then looking calmly back when at the goal,  
Resign to God our actions with our Soul!

But for the Pen shall we the Pencil shun,  
The Sister Art who greatest gifts hath won?  
Inaugurating man with that bright crown,  
That brought e'en angels' admiration down!  
In heavenly bowers ere Eden was proclaimed,  
She 'mongst Intelligences high was famed!

And when Jehovah framed the virgin earth,  
When no bright hues adorned its pristine birth,  
But one unvarying beauteous glowing green,  
Spread o'er her myriad vales, alone was seen.  
Then, lo! the seventh morn, a Heavenly Grace,  
Traversed with joy the young Creation's face,  
With wand she touch'd each bud as on she flew,  
Quick to the touch they opened to the view,  
And as they blushing met the gaze of day,  
She bathed them in ambrosial dews of May,  
The whilst the glorious hues she brought from heaven,  
Flickering around her, on the buds were graven.

Thus had it been for ever, but the Fall  
O'er nature's face unsparing flung its pall,  
Still she, the Guardian of the earth's bright flowers,  
As Spring returns descends from her high bowers,  
(Where she each floral magic color weaves,  
And tints, to deck earth's myriad forest leaves,)  
And as she flies unnumbered beauteous hues,  
On every opening flower with care imbues :

Lo! where she last reposed, her course complete,  
Innumerable rose-beds mark her pure retreat,  
Bright blooming hosts she scatters as she flies  
Of Roses, fairest flowers that mortals prize!  
Emblem of virtuous life, that e'en when dead,  
Around its sepulchre sweet odours spread.

Hail! Poesy, hail! Painting, both all hail!  
May your benignant teachings never fail,  
May ye as erst conspire to bless his days,  
Who at your shrines his daily homage pays.  
And long within that Castle's noble walls,  
May taste and talent vie to grace its halls,  
May nature spread around with liberal hand,  
The gems that deck proud Albion's favored land.  
May he, too, live for many lengthened years,  
And hope support him void of earthly fears,  
May every hour that leads him to the tomb,  
Make the bright future wear a brighter bloom,  
And death close round him as the falling night,  
The sure precursor of Heaven's dawning light.

Supplementary to this sketch of the prosperous English Village, I must add a few elucidatory remarks upon what has been advanced therein.

With regard to spirits, (see page 267, line 32 *ante*) Dr. Johnson was of opinion, that it was a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the understanding: and Southey says, "that they who have endeavoured to dispossess the people of their old instinctive belief in such things, have done little service to individuals, and much injury to the community; in the scale of existences there may be as many orders above us as below; we know there are creatures so minute, that without the aid of our glasses they could never have been discovered, and therefore, there may be beings which are invisible because of their subtlety."

In the reading of the English Village it may be objected that I express myself too strongly against the *state* of the Manufacturing Operatives, but any one who will take a stroll through the streets of Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, will, doubtless, feel fully satisfied that I do not; the youngest children of their families are dressed in rags and covered with dirt—the elder are wan—the mothers are careworn and haggard, and carry anxiety in their countenances—whilst the fathers loiter along the streets devoid of spirit, and seem

"Deserted e'en by hope—  
Man's morning star,"

their dwellings are counterparts of themselves, and their knowledge of everything (except the Political state of Europe!) is a blank. I am not a lonely witness of these facts, I appeal to any one who lives in these towns to contravene then; legislative measures will never remedy the evils, the operatives and their employers must join in removing them; sarcasm is as powerful as Acts of Parliament in many cases, and remonstrances are often felt where Acts of Parliament would be looked upon as intrusions in the economy of man's daily duties at home. Where are the Manufacturers' premiums for their Workmen's superior acquirements or habits? Agriculturists



give premiums for even fattening pigs! Is a man's length of service pointed out as an example and rewarded? Is his honesty stamped upon a medal as a memorial for his children? And as to the children, can it be expected that Sunday Schools alone shall in one day out of seven counteract the mental disorders they imbibe during the other six in manufactories? To be plain, we see on the one hand wealth accumulating, and on the other, an equal accumulation of physical and moral evil, this is

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"The harm  
That never shall recover healthfulness."

The Sikhs, with whom we were some time since contesting, call their superior Deity "All Steel," I think that Deity reigns over a great number in England. In an eminent writer's words we may ask, "What then shall we say of a system which in its direct consequences debases all who are engaged in it? A system that employs men unremittingly in pursuits, unwholesome for the body, and unprofitable for the mind; a system in which the means are so bad that any result would be too dearly purchased at such an expense of human misery and degradation; and the end so fearful, that the worst calamities which society has hitherto endured, may be deemed light in comparison with it!"

May it not therefore be asked, are not all the features belonging to Manufactures deformed? From the most prominent of, Mammon's temples (the manufactories) down to the lowest hut where "his helotry are stalled," have they not all the same impress? Years make them not venerable, they are never the associates of pleasant memories, and Nature shuns them—they stand naked, and cold, and raw before the world, and though so offensive to the eye, she refuses to clothe, and man to embellish them. I will leave it to those who accumulate large properties in a few years, whether or not the spirit of their trading does not encourage calculation at the expense of fellow-feeling. Are not Manufactories the greatest of men-slayers? Is the building of Mills the solace of such men's lives? Is the meaning of the word "Welfare"—Wealth? All ages have their excesses—there

was the age of Popedom that carried all before it, till its own weight crushed it: then came the age of Gunpowder which slew its millions, and left millions of debt as a legacy on the shoulders of the living: this is the age of Steam and Hurry, and will be very likely to end in

"All things vain;—abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed."

In the course of cleaning the walls of the church at Quatford, Mr Smalman found a very perfect Norman Arch separating the chancel from the body, which had been smothered from time to time by various coats of whitewash and plaster, but now stands in its original state.

At page 276 I use the words—

"That brought e'en angels' admiration down."

This has reference to the beautiful and well-known tradition attached to the painting of "The Last Supper," by Leonardo da Vinci.



## CHAPTER XIV.

"Whatever result await myself, I enjoy the consciousness of having done right, nor have I been denied either the happiness of having done good, or the substantial sympathies of friends, neighbours, and strangers, to all of whom I would thankfully offer the unfeigned assurance of a gratitude which will I trust never leave me. And trying as is the work in which I am engaged, with all that talent, leisure, and gold can effect, arrayed against me, I yet feel it a privilege and a blessing that I am able to labour in such a cause; assured, that truth and justice (however weak their instruments) are in their own might, stronger than all power, and will in the end assert their majesty and hold their own."—*Vide*, page 20, Rev. R. Whiston's Preface to his "CATHEDRAL TRUSTS AND THEIR FULFILMENT."—*Third Edition*.

I now began to attend the market at Bromsgrove on Tuesdays. The distance being short, (rather under ten miles) I generally went to it on horseback. The principal places on the road were Stone and Chaddesley-Corbett. Bromsgrove I found almost wholly to consist of one street, built on the turnpike road, half-way between Birmingham and Worcester. At the time of the Conqueror's survey it was in the King's ancient demesne, which freed the residents of the Manor from the expenses attached to sending members to Parliament, from serving on juries beyond the bounds of the manor, and also from all tolls throughout the whole kingdom. There were no members sent thence to Parliament when I travelled thereto, but it appears that it was represented in past times, as it is recorded in history that two members were elected as far back as the reign of Edward I.

The buying and selling of corn at Bromsgrove, I found was carried on in the main street in the open air; and, as many of the farmers dined at the "Bell," I used to put up there. This was the favourite resort of sporting farmers, and consequently the conversation was nearly all about coursing.

I heard every now and then some grumbling among the town's-people about the system adopted at their grammar school,

and as the inhabitants of Kidderminster were now bestirring themselves as to their school, I made all the inquiries I could, in hope of gaining some information on the general question of grammar, or free, schools.

The Bromsgrove School was attended by twelve blue-coat boys, this being the number originally named by the Founder, Sir Thomas Cookes, but there was also a host of boarders, from all parts of the United Kingdom, who were housed, fed, and educated in buildings attached thereto, the cost of which was, of course, defrayed by the parents. The town boys, or blue boys as they were generally called, were simply educated in the three R's, whilst the boarders were classically trained, so as to take the scholarships, which were founded by Sir Thomas Cookes in 1696, for the benefit of the twelve poor boys. This was the sore point, and all the inhabitants, except the few tradesmen who supplied the school with necessaries, were very sour about it.

I was pressed on all sides to expose the system, but I declined doing so then, as I wished to see the Kidderminster case tested; after which I told the Bromsgrove people, I would aid them in procuring a reformation if it were possible.

On my return journeys, I called several times at the free school at Stone to have a chat with Mr. Glover, the master, whose salary was only £65 per annum. The school room was very small, in fact much too small for the number of boys and girls in it, who huddled together as best they could. This could have been altered, as there was a considerable fund in hand.

Including the other charities, the sum invested by the Trustees was about £6,000; out of the interest upon which, they also supported two minor schools, one at Shenstone, and another at the Hoo, as preparatory to the school at Stone. The Trustees published their accounts for the satisfaction of the parishioners, and in the book containing the accounts, commencing in 1788, was a paper, pasted therein, containing the following words, in the handwriting of George Jordan, then master of the school at Stone:—

"22nd Dec. 1794.—Samuel Steward, Esq., has in his hands of the parish money £50, for which he promises to pay interest at five per cent."

On the same paper is a memorandum in the same handwriting, dated 29th September, 1795, stating that John Steward, Esq., had in his hands of the above charity money £20, for which the arrear of interest, at four per cent., had been paid up to that time.

There was also affixed by wafers in the same book an unstamped paper, in the same handwriting, in the following words :—

"I do hereby promise to pay to the feoffees, or one of the feoffees of the charity at Stone, in trust for the said charity, or his or their order, £200 on demand, together with lawful interest for the same, for value received, being the monies received from Mr. William Waldron for the said charity, of Mr. William Waldron. Witness my hand, this 5th day of August, 1797. This to be entered upon stamp when required.

(Signed)

"SAMUEL STEWARD."

"Witness, GEORGE JORDAN."

The signatures of George Jordan and Samuel Steward were in the handwriting of the parties.

The school benefaction was included in the gifts of Folyott, Wall, and Thatcher, for various purposes, prior to 1648,—viz., 16th and 19th Henry VII. In August, 1831, a sum of stock, producing £2,633 4s. 5d., was sold out to defray the expense of rebuilding the parish church, leaving £3,688 15s. 7d., which was increased, by a purchase made 7th April, 1832, to £4,104 3s. 1d. On the 12th of May, 1832, there was £1,331 10s. 1d. to the credit of the trustees, at Farley and Turner's Bank, Kidderminster.

A sum was annually contributed out of the funds of this charity towards the support of Hill's school; and by different entries, the interest accruing upon the several sums in the hands of the Messrs. Steward were shown to have been so appropriated. Thus, a sum of £9, for twelve years' interest up to Michaelmas, 1807, upon the above-mentioned sum of £20, was stated to have been paid to the master of Hill's school, and Samuel Steward was acknowledged by the said George Jordan to have paid him the interest upon the £200 of Stone charity money up to the year 1805. The interest of the £50 was also entered as paid. From the year 1805, the interest was stated in the book to remain unpaid up to the year 1810, at which period the accounts cease. By an account entered in the same book, in the handwriting of

Jordan, it further appeared that on the 21st December, 1802, there was in the hands of Samuel Steward a balance of £101 6s.

John Steward was the father of Samuel, whose son, Thomas Steward, died about 1832. They were all possessed of considerable real property in the parish of Stone. Before the time of the Charity Commissioners' Inquiry, application had been made to the family on behalf of the charity; but, although a disposition to settle the claim had been expressed, no arrangement had taken place. The Commissioners renewed the application by letter to the daughters of the late Samuel Steward, who were in possession of the family estate, and had an interview with their solicitor. After that they received a letter from the professional friend and adviser of Mr. and Mrs. Evans and Miss Steward, the parties above alluded to, stating that they were willing to pay to the Stone charity the sum of £500, in discharge of the claim arising out of the above circumstances. This very liberal offer the trustees acceded to, being so advantageous to the charity.

The following is the Commissioners' report as to Hill's benefaction to the school:—

Richard Hill, rector of Thurcaston, in the county of Leicester, clerk (who died in 1730), by his will gave all his lands at the Hoo, in Stone, to the vicar, churchwardens, and constable, for the time being, of the parish of Stone for ever, in trust, to put to school at Stone as many of the poor children of the parish as the rent thereof would pay schooling for, and buy Bibles for; and he desired that the children of his poor kindred and relations might be chosen before all others to be his scholars, of what parish or name soever they might be, if they should live near enough to come to school at Stone, and their parents should desire it; and after his kindred, the poorest children in the parish, preferring those of Shenstone, *cæteris paribus*, being his native place; and once in ten years he allowed one to be put to school out of his native house at Shenstone, and out of his charity house at the Hoo; and he desired that the master should receive 2s. a quarter for each of his scholars, the number of the scholars to be regulated by the amount of the rents, and a proportionable

number to be chosen out of every village or other little place in the parish, according to *their poverty*, the vacancies to be filled up by the vicar, or if the vicarage should be vacant, by the churchwardens. And he committed the entire management of the school estate to the vicar, churchwardens, and constable, for the time being, jointly; and he directed the churchwardens to pay half-yearly to the schoolmaster his proportion of the rents, and to take care that the buildings be always kept in repair; and to pay to the vicar, whenever it should be necessary, 20s. or 24s., to buy four good Bibles, it being his will that a good Bible, with the Common Prayer and Singing Psalms, well bound, of about 5s. or 6s. price, should be given at leaving the school to every one of his poor scholars who should have been timely admitted, and of good behaviour and diligent, and able to read that chapter in the Holy Bible, truly, distinctly, and leisurely, in which the vicar should please to try them, upon their coming to him on the very day of their leaving school, to thank him for their learning, to be examined by him, and to receive a Bible, together with a farewell charge from him. But no scholar not qualified, or who should neglect to come to the vicar on the very day of his leaving school, was to receive a Bible; and it was his earnest desire that the vicar should take care that the schoolmaster should always be a sober, grave, orthodox member of the Church of England, well-skilled, and careful to train them up in good morality and orthodox Christianity, and should carefully teach them to read the Holy Bible, to write a fair hand, to understand and practice arithmetic, to sing psalms, and say the Church Catechism. And he directed the churchwardens to account yearly for the rents and profits of the school estate at the Hoo before the vicar, overseers, and constable, and such other parishioners of Stone as should be present at the first parish meeting at Stone church after Easter-day; and he requested the lord bishop of Worcester to have a watchful eye upon the administration of the charity; and if it should happen that the same should be misapplied, then the testator gave the lands at the Hoo to the vicar, churchwardens, and overseers of the adjoining parish of Kidderminster, in trust,

for the same charitable uses for the poor children of Kidderminster, for the term of fifteen years, and on the expiration of that term, then the estate to be restored to the charity school at Stone, but subject to a similar forfeiture in case of neglect or default; and the testator directed all difficulties which should arise respecting the charity estate, to be referred immediately to the bishop of the diocese for his decision; and he made it his zealous request to the vicar of Stone, that he would always make the master of the charity school his parish clerk, for his better encouragement; and he desired the master of the school to make it his business to instil into any boy of promising parts such learning as would qualify him for the mastership of the school when vacant.

The property derived from the will of the Rev. Richard Hill, consists of a dwelling house, barn, stable, and out-buildings, with 15A. 2R. 32P. of land, lying in the Hoo Fields, to which, about the year 1760, an addition of 4A. 1R. was made under an Inclosure Act.

The estate being dispersed in numerous small lots, none consisting of as much as an acre, was intermixed with the lands of John Baker, Esq., the principal proprietor in the parish, and lord of the manor, and having right of common over Mr. Baker's lands, it was agreed upon, for the mutual benefit of both properties, that the lands of the charity should be more conveniently laid together by exchanges from Mr. Baker, and that he would make an addition thereto in lieu of the right of common over his estate.

Mr. William Callow, a surveyor of great respectability, was employed in the year 1810 by both parties to effect this exchange, and the several lands were set out by him to their satisfaction, and each party took possession of the lands so allotted to them. Mr. Callow, in 1817, made an affidavit of these circumstances, in which affidavit it is also stated, that it was directed by him, and agreed to by Mr. Baker, that he was to remove the buildings upon the original charity land which lay near his own premises, and erect the same upon the land which the charity was to have,



more convenient for that estate; and also to plant and set up a fence between his land and the school land at his own expense, and that such exchange was for the mutual benefit of the parties.

Mr. Baker took possession of the charity land, including the school house, and pulled down the out-buildings, leaving a cottage and the school standing, and used the materials for his own purposes. He died about four or five years afterwards, but without having erected any new buildings on the charity estate. Mr. Baker's only child was a posthumous daughter, who was made a ward in Chancery, and nothing was done by the family or the trustees towards completing the contract by rebuilding the farm premises. Miss Baker died under age in 1830, and the estates descended to the four sisters of her father, who came into possession of the premises received in exchange from the charity.

The vicar and other trustees of the charity then applied to Mr. Baker, the agent for the family, who admitted the facts, and stated that he would take counsel's opinion on the case; the doubt appearing to be whether the real estate or the personal was liable to make good the expense of constructing the buildings, which was calculated at £300.

The property held by the charity consisted of about twenty-three acres of land lying together, on the part alluded to in Mr. Callow's affidavit. It was then let to William Crowther, the tenant of Mr. Baker's estate, at £32 a year; afterwards the rent was £34 per annum, less ten shillings land tax. The rent was paid to the schoolmaster, who also received the dividends from Pratt's charity hereafter mentioned. The master had about thirty-five boys and girls, who are admitted on a certificate from the vicar that he has examined them and found them competent according to the directions of the donor.

After the Commissioners' visit, an offer was made by Mr. S. Baker, the agent for the sisters of Mr. Baker, who succeeded to his real estate, to defray half the expense of restoring the building and making the fences, if the owners of the personal estate would contribute the other half. These terms were acceded to, and an estimate prepared of the expense necessary, and the amount paid

over to the trustees of the charity by the parties above mentioned in equal moieties.

There was another gift bequeathed by Thomas Pratt, of Duncleth, (who died in July, 1802,) to the trustees of the free school at Stone, amounting to £100, which he ordered to be placed out at interest, and the produce applied in augmentation of the schoolmaster's salary. This legacy was invested in the purchase of £150 2s. three per cent. consols, in 1803, and stood, in 1832, in the names of the Rev. John Peel, John Amphlett and John Wilson, into whose names it had been transferred on the 15th October, 1829, and the dividends, amounting to £4 10s. per annum, were paid over to the master of Hill's school ever since.

Mr. John Taylor, late of Winterfold, in the parish of Chaddesley Corbett, also bequeathed to the poor of this parish by his will, bearing date the year 1687, the sum of 20s. per annum, out of his lands lying in the parish of Stone, to be disposed of at the discretion of his heirs and executors for ever. The land charged by John Taylor is situate in the parish of Stone, and is bounded on the north-east by the Curslow-road leading to Bradford, and contains about nine acres.

This land came to the Rev. Thomas Harward, in right of his wife, who through her mother was heiress of the donor's family. Mr. Harward paid 20s. yearly to Mr. Morgan, the curate of Stone, who laid it out in Bibles, given to the children educated at Hill's school; but this, it appeared, had been discontinued.

Looking at the revenues, I considered that the school should be pulled down and a larger one built, and doubtless such would have been the case long before, had the trustees been elected by the parishioners.

The proceedings as to the Kidderminster school became more decided after the publication of my "Appeal" to the tradesmen of the parish, especially as the system carried on at the school had results unfavourable to the town boys. The most prominent facts on this head, were the diminution of the town boys, and the giving twenty-one out of twenty-four prizes to the boarders, as stated at page 246.

The consequence was that a town's meeting was held, at which the following resolutions were adopted :—

" Borough of Kidderminster, County of Worcester.—At a meeting of the inhabitants of Kidderminster, in the County of Worcester, duly convened by the Right Worshipful the Mayor, in pursuance of a requisition, 'To consider and determine upon the most effectual steps to be adopted to restore the privileges of the grammar school to the sons of parishioners, as contained in the charter granted by King Charles the First,' holden at the Guildhall, and from thence, by adjournment, to the Market-house, the 1st day of December, 1848. The Right Worshipful the Mayor in the chair.

" Moved by Mr. Henry Brinton, seconded by Mr. George Griffith, and resolved unanimously—That this meeting disapproves of the scheme, dated 19th November, 1844, by which the Grammar School of King Charles the First is at present managed, inasmuch as it requires the parishioners to pay £1 per quarter for forty boys, and £2 per quarter for all above forty. 2. As it permits the head master to keep an unlimited number of boarders. 3. As it does not confer on the mayor the power of being a feoffee by virtue of his office. 4. As it excludes all boys who are not the children of churchmen. And 5. As it is not in accordance with the original charter and the 3 and 4 Vict., cap. 77.

" Moved by Mr. Joseph Yeates, seconded by Mr. John Boraston, and resolved unanimously—That this meeting, through their chairman, do petition the Lord Chancellor of England, the Lord Bishop of the diocese, as visitor, the feoffees of the Grammar School, and the Town Council, as to the grievances set forth in the foregoing resolution, and otherwise, with a view to their removal, and to place the school upon the foundation as laid down in the charter of King Charles the First.

" Moved by Mr. William Fawcett, seconded by Mr. Thomas Jeavons, and resolved unanimously—That this meeting learns with surprise that the head master was one of the petitioners to the Court of Chancery to get the recent alterations effected; and that, although £30 is ordered by the scheme of November 19, 1844, for books and prizes yearly for the service of the grammar school, the parents of the boys since that period have been charged with all school books in the education of their sons.

" Moved by Mr. George Turton, seconded by Mr. Thomas Lloyd and resolved unanimously—That a committee of ten persons be appointed to watch the interests of the school, to take proceedings in equity or otherwise, and to dispose of the subscriptions of the parishioners to defray the expenses thereof, and that proper persons in the town be named to receive subscriptions in the various districts.

" Moved by Mr. William Minifie, seconded by Mr. Joseph Wright and

resolved unanimously—That this meeting views with the utmost confidence and approbation the exertions of Mr. George Griffith heretofore, to restore the school according to the original charter, and solicits his assistance in all future operations thereupon.

“Moved by Mr. Samuel Broom, seconded by Mr. George Griffith, and resolved unanimously—That copies of the resolutions of this meeting be transmitted to B. Godson, Esq., M.P.; Viscount Mandeville, M.P.; and all the county members; and that they be inserted in the *Daily News*, *Ten Towns Messenger*, *Worcester Chronicle*, and *Worcester Journal*.

“Moved by Mr. George Griffith, seconded by Mr. George Turton, and resolved unanimously—That the movers and seconders of the first five resolutions, with the Mayor, as chairman, *ex officio*, form the committee, in pursuance of the fourth resolution.

“WILLIAM RODEN, M.D., Mayor, *Chairman at the opening of the Meeting.*

“JAMES TUDOR, *Deputy Chairman, in the unavoidable absence of the Mayor, from an urgent professional call.*

“The deputy chairman having left the chair, and the same having been taken by Mr. Henry Brinton, on the motion of Mr. John Law, seconded by Mr. Joseph Wright, it was resolved unanimously—That the cordial thanks of this meeting be given to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, for his kindness in convening the meeting and taking the chair, and also to Mr. Tudor, as his deputy, for the able and impartial manner in which the business of the meeting has been conducted.

“H. BRINTON.”

Before proceeding further, and in order to elucidate the question it may be considered pardonable if I insert the following speech, delivered by me at the above-named town's-meeting, and which appeared in the *Worcestershire Chronicle*:—

“Mr. Griffith said, they were assembled for the discussion of a matter which deeply concerned every householder in the parish. The points they had to consider were, whether there were not ample funds at hand for all purposes of the school without making any charge for the foundation boys, and whether there ought to be a limit to their number; also, whether there ought to be any boarders permitted; and lastly, whether, with increasing funds, there ought not to be exhibitions for the sons of the parishioners, independent of the salaries of the masters. Before he knew anything of the charter, or of the manner in which the school was managed, he felt indignant, when he sat in the school-room in the month of June last,

and saw no less than twenty-one prizes given to the children of non-parishioners, while, out of the population of the parish, numbering between 20,000 and 30,000, only three of the native boys obtained prizes. Now, he could appeal to one of the most respectable feoffees, who would bear him out, that previously to his expressed determination of opposing the feoffees in Chancery, he had an interview with the head master and the vicar, but found it utterly impossible to come to any terms with them; indeed, at these interviews he found that what had previously been told him, so far from having been exaggerated, was not up to the reality, the head master declaring that he would exercise the power of taking the whole of the surplus rents to found exhibitions for the private pupils. He should never forget another circumstance which occurred in that school-room, when he saw the head master of the school bringing forth two boys—the sons of strangers—to speak Latin and English poetry, while not one of the town boys was so advanced. Now, he thought that the head master, out of courtesy to the institution which provided his excellent salary, and enabled him to live in a noble house for the accommodation of himself and boarders, ought at least to have brought forward double the number of town boys. He specially asserted this, because, in his pamphlet, entitled ‘An Apology for the Town Boys,’ he had shown that the prizes had not been carried away by the boarders on account of their superior age, as he had proved by comparative lists of boarders and town boys of the same ages; but rather in consequence of the greater educational facilities afforded to the boarders. He should never forget the sarcastic remark of the Lord Bishop of Worcester, at the opening of the new school in June last, when he said that he hoped to see more space occupied by the boys when he next visited it; he knew it was amply endowed for a great number of boys, and when he came to that gorgeous room, containing so numerous an attendance of gentry, he felt disappointed. What (thought he), is not this town capable of bringing forward one boy to exhibit, after having the benefit of an institution with £700 or £800 a year income to pay for their education? And, therefore, he hoped to see a greater space occupied by the boys. His Lordship did not then know—but he knew now—the state of the school affairs.


“He went on to notice a discrepancy with regard to the old school, which was more than sufficient for all the purposes of the foundation, had it not been for the boarders’ requirements. In the month of June, that room had been pronounced ‘small and wretched,’ and the head master had asserted that it was but one-third the size of the new one; whereas it was sworn in April by affidavit that the new room was 58½ feet in length and 27 feet wide, while the old one was 55 feet by 24½ feet—a difference certainly not worth mentioning. The head master also said, in his speech on the

occasion named, that when he came to the school there were but seven boys, whereas an affidavit was in existence showing that the number of boys was forty-eight at that time—that is, forty in the lower and eight in the upper school. They all recollected how liberally the prizes had been awarded on late occasions, but he should like to know who paid for the prizes to the boarders—what became of the allowance reserved for the town boys' books—and why twenty-one prizes were awarded to boarders, and but three to the others? They also recollected that, at the before-mentioned meeting, Mr. Cloughton was complimented for having given the munificent sum of £1,200 towards the purchase of Woodfield, whereas it appeared to have been part of a contract by which the old school room, worth at least £1,000, was exchanged for one of £1,200; and yet the credit was claimed of having given the new school-room. In proof of this assertion he read the contract.

“He next noticed the inconvenience of the town boys' having to walk from long distances—some of them even to and from Comberton, to Woodfield, six times a day, while the boarders had but a few yards to walk; and, to show that this alteration had been designed for the special accommodation of the boarders he read a printed circular, dated Woodfield House, December 13, 1847, addressed to the parents of the boarders, soliciting their aid to the proposed building of the new school, on the ground that ‘my own boarders will be especially accommodated, as it will remove what many parents have regarded, and perhaps with reason, as a serious objection to the school, that they are now obliged, in all weather, to walk to and fro six times a day, a distance of rather more than half-a-mile, to the present grammar school.’ Nothing, however, was said about the inconvenience of the town boys walking six times a day through the streets, and, whether in rain or snow, being obliged to wait at the doors of the school till the masters of the boarders came to let them in.

“He complained of the feoffment of 1844, as having taken away the privileges of the town; that instrument, too, having been paid for by the very parties whom it wronged. Moreover, it was locked up in a chest, and could not be looked at. That feoffment, among other things, displaced the mayor from his office as feoffee. He would ask if it seemed right that while some of the town councillors were feoffees, the senior officer of the corporation, should be denied that capacity? It was an insult to the whole town, as represented by and in the person of the mayor. It was also a grievance that the payments of the town boys should be increased, when their number exceeded forty. It was the usual custom to diminish individual payments in proportion as their numbers increased, but this was

only a further attempt to discourage the increase of the town boys at the school. When he (Mr. Griffith) went to London on other business, he waited on Mr. Godson, the member for the borough, who was not previously aware of any of the circumstances. Mr. Godson took notes of all that was said, and the next post after his, (Mr. Griffith's) return, brought a letter from that gentleman, stating that the allegations contained much matter requiring explanation, and that he would make inquiries. Now he had no doubt that Mr. Godson was heart and soul with them. He had told Mr. Godson that if he wished to maintain his seat in perpetuity, this one thing alone would secure it. Mr. Griffith then detailed some cases which had occurred contrary to the governing rules of the school; alleged that the £30 allowed for books by the feoffment had never been heard of; and that even the charge of £1 per quarter had been laid on many months before the power was granted to do so. He instanced the case of Mrs. Humphreys, in the Bull-ring; also of a widow in Church-street, whose sons were taken away because they would not continue to pay that amount; and of another widow, with two promising boys, who were deprived in a similar manner of that education which the original charter declared should be free to all, and for which purpose a noble endowment of more than £700 a year was in existence. The least thing that could be done was to limit the number of boarders, as the feoffees were empowered to do; but the best thing—and what must be done, too—was to have no boarders at all. There was money enough to pay two as good men as ever left Oxford, and to educate all the boys in the town, without requiring boarders. Other obstructions had been thrown in the way of town boys, one having been rejected in consequence of being only three weeks under age, and many of the town's people were requested to send their children elsewhere, unless they intended them to have a classical education. Then, again, boarders could be admitted any day, but town boys only four times in the year. There were other instances of preference and distinction, such as the boarders being allowed to be admitted after they were sixteen years old, which was not the case with the foundation boys. He would not say a word about the exclusion of Dissenters, as Mr. Brinton had so well handled that subject, but he had been told by one of the most active feoffees that Dissenters were admissible; however, when he (Mr. Griffith) went to London, he found they were shut out by the new scheme, and he read an extract from the scheme now before the Lord Chancellor, to prove his statement. There were many similar schools in the kingdom which had limited the number of foundation boys, but the Act of 1840 threw open these restricted schools. The Kidderminster school, however, would not have required the interference of that Act, being sufficiently liberal under its old charter, yet



Greek and Latin were taught almost to the exclusion of a commercial education. The new alterations were, therefore, clearly opposed both to the charter and the Act of Parliament.

"One other thing he wished to notice, namely, that the money paid by the town boys went to the head master and not any to the second master. Now, if paid at all, he thought it should be divided between the masters, in the same proportion as their salaries—namely, two-thirds to the head master, and one-third to the second master. He had no doubt that the detail of these grievances, of which the parishioners had from time to time complained, would induce them to rise and regain their privileges. The head master had said in his speech, that a limited number of boys was best, therefore, why should not the boarders be limited? Was it a desirable thing for the town that as many gentlemen's sons should come as could be got? He thought it was not a very modest act on the part of the head master to put his name first to a petition which contemplated his own advantage so palpably. The new scheme put before the Court of Chancery last month contained another restriction, by proposing to limit the admission ages of the town boys from eight to fifteen years, beyond which they are not to be admitted into the school. This new deed also allowed the master and his boarders to reside at Woodfield; but the deed was not signed yet, and he declared his determination to oppose it to the utmost. Mr. Griffith then gave a notion of the master's emoluments. There was £240 salary allowed to the head master, with a house, £120 per annum. That was £360; and if forty boys were added, at £4 each, that would make in the whole £520, without boarders, which, reckoning forty at £20 profit each, would increase it to upwards of £1,300 per annum. Now, if they limited him to twelve boarders (which was the number allowed in the Birmingham free school, where no less than 450 town boys were educated), that would be £600 a year.

"Then there was another thing. A scheme had been sent in, which was to grant exhibitions to boarders and to town boys alike; but he was told that on the boarders being erased by the Chancellor, the parties promoting the scheme withdrew it, and presented the other, in which neither boarders nor town boys were mentioned for exhibitions,—thus, like the dog in the manger, determining, that if they could not obtain the exhibitions for one party, the other should not have them. The feoffment of 1844 provided that the number of boys should be published half-yearly, in order to create a continual interest in the minds of the inhabitants, and thus promote the utility of the institution, but the feoffees had never published anything of the sort, and whilst many of the inhabitants of the town paid the rents of



the school properties, they did not derive those advantages therefrom to which they and the parishioners generally were entitled. Every year the rents increased and the boys decreased. It was, therefore, necessary that some alteration should take place. He would say nothing about the exchange of the school property, although he thought that but few persons, in dealing with their own property, would have exchanged 50½ acres of land for 9½ acres and an old house.

"Having alluded to the fact that the town clerk was paid £20 a year as Trust Clerk of the school, Mr. Griffith went on to remark that he thought all present were unanimously opposed to the school alterations; and if the other party accused him of being jaundiced, he would reply that, by putting the school right, they would at once cure him; and even if he were put out of the field, ninety-nine out of every hundred of his fellow-townsmen would be found to be of the same opinion with himself, and the question might be safely left to them. He cared not for the attacks of these who were in a privileged position, but when he had a good object in view he would never cease till he had obtained it. He had made an offer to the feoffees, that if they would put the school right in the matters complained of, he would give up the subscriptions he held in his hands (for the prosecution of the suit against them) to be distributed in coals and other charities to the poor during the present winter, but they declined the offer. The new scheme now propounded was worse than the previous one, and more obnoxious to the townsmen; and if they would subscribe to oppose it, he would promise them as much of his time and personal services as he could spare from business. The law was with him, and so were the Lord Chancellor and the borough M.P., and the M.P. for the other part of the parish; and if only 100 of the parishioners would each subscribe what it would cost them for one year's education of their sons at the grammar school, he would win the battle for them. Mr. Griffith concluded amid general applause by seconding the resolution, which, like the rest, was carried without one dissentient."

The committee nominated at the above meeting, in accordance with the second resolution, sent petitions to the bishop as visitor of the school, to the feoffees, and to the town council—of which the following copy of that sent to the bishop embraces the matter of the three; excepting that, in the one sent to the town council, a desire was expressed that the mayor should be a feoffee *ex officio*, as the high-bailiff had been, especially as several members of the town council were feoffees.

*"To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester, Visitor of the Free Grammar School of Kidderminster.*

"May it please your Lordship,

"At a meeting of the inhabitants of Kidderminster, held in the Guildhall, on the 1st of December, 1848, the Worshipful the Mayor in the Chair,

"It was resolved to present a petition to your lordship on the following points:—

"That whereas under the original charter granted by King Charles the First to our grammar school, it was ordered that all the sons of parishioners should be educated therein (if the parents wished) free of charge for education, and also that a sum of money should be allowed to pay for their educational books, and also that the masters' undivided attention should be given to the sons of parishioners on pain of dismissal:

"And whereas, by a scheme sanctioned by the Court of Chancery in 1844, a charge of £1 per quarter was laid on the sons of parishioners up to the number of forty, and £2 per quarter beyond forty; and also that the practice is for the educational books to be paid for by the boys' parents, and that the head master is allowed to keep an unlimited number of boarders, which prevents the master from giving that attention to the scholars upon the foundation which the donor intended to be given; and that in the distribution of prizes the boarders have a preference to the day scholars:

"They, therefore, considering these alterations (which are in contravention of the original charter, and the 3rd and 4th of Victoria, chap. 77) to be highly detrimental to the interests of the parish, humbly pray your lordship, as visitor of the school, to institute an investigation, with a view to afford the required redress.

"And your petitioners will, as in duty bound, ever pray, &c.

"WILLIAM RODEN, M.D., *Chairman at the opening of the Meeting.*

"J. TUDOR, *Deputy Chairman, in the unavoidable absence of the Mayor from an urgent professional call.*"

The petition to the bishop having been forwarded to him by the mayor, he received a reply, and thereupon sent the following to the secretary of the committee:—

*"Kidderminster, Dec. 14, 1848.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—At the request of the lord bishop of Worcester, I beg to inform you, and, through you, the committee on the grammar school, that his lordship will be detained in London till Christmas, after which he will be at Hartlebury again, and will then fix an early day for the investigation on certain matters alluded to in the petition forwarded to him.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"To W. Boycot, Jun., Esq.,  
Sec. to Committee."

"Very truly yours,  
"WM. RODEN, Mayor."

In the mean-time the town council met, and the following is a report of their proceedings, as published in the *Worcester Journal*, Dec. 21, 1848.

“KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL.

“A meeting of the town council was held on Friday last, (the 15th), the mayor in the chair, to consider the town’s-meeting petition, as to the mayor not being a feoffee of the grammar school. The mayor said he had called the present meeting to receive a petition from the town’s-meeting committee, as voted at that meeting on the 1st instant. He hoped that, in future, all their council meetings would be more business-like, and for a saving of time he suggested that every councillor should make but one speech, except in reply upon a motion. Harmony was essential, and he hoped the council would support him in endeavouring to maintain it. The mayor then read the petition, which complained of the mayor not being a feoffee by virtue of his office, and called on the council to reinstate the mayor.

“The town-clerk was going to explain, when

“Mr. Tudor called upon him to confine himself to the petition.

“The town-clerk persisted.

“Mr. H. Brinton wished this point to be settled, and demurred to the town-clerk making a series of speeches. He did not think, when he laid anything on the table, he ought to make any remarks.

“Mr. Best begged the mayor to call order, and remarked that the question ought to be strictly adhered to.

“Mr. H. Brinton rose and said—I need not take up much time in laying the question before you. The late mayor complained of that officer being shut out from being a feoffee. I beg, therefore, to move, that a memorial be presented to the feoffees, to call upon them to reinstate the mayor, and I believe this council much desire it.

“The mayor then put Mr. Brinton’s motion.

“Mr. Tudor seconded it, saying,—He had great pleasure in doing so, particularly as almost all the council were desirous it should be carried out. He (the mayor) ought to be at the head of all such bodies in the borough, and he regretted that the late mayor, whom they had so lately met on social grounds, was not a feoffee by virtue of his office. If any one mayor should in future be to blame, let not that shut out all mayors from this privilege. He wished, like Mr. Brinton, to avoid litigation, and so did the town’s meeting,—a meeting more numerous attended than any that had been held there for many years. The town-clerk had said the petition urged them to have a suit in Chancery. Would any one else say so? He denied it *in toto*. The mayor wished regularity, and when he (Mr. Tudor)

found the town-clerk seeking to push his presence on the town council, whilst he was their servant, he must protest against it.

"The town-clerk again mentioned a Chancery suit, of which no notice was taken.

"Mr. Best rose and said—I congratulate the town's meeting on confining themselves to this point alone in their petition. I relied, when I was mayor, on being a feoffee, and was astonished at the refusal. There must have been some great neglect in those that drew up the draft, yet Mr. Morton, the then mayor, was inserted in it, and the Master in Chancery erased him.

"The town-clerk explained that Mr. Morton was named a feoffee, and was entitled to that office in perpetuity.

"Mr. Best—It is very clear that the mayor is not a feoffee, and it is highly disadvantageous to find he is not so. I am desirous, if it can be done at a little expense, that he should be reinstated. I shall vote for the motion.

"The town-clerk—I beg to explain, that in 1842 it was well understood that the mayor was not a feoffee. I did not draw up the feoffment.

"Mr. Best—I ask Mr. Hallen, did he not call me to the meeting as mayor and feoffee?

"Mr. Boycot, sen.—I always instructed the town-clerk to be sure to insert the mayor as a feoffee. I therefore support the motion heartily.

"Mr. Harvey rose to put an amendment, and said—It is not to be wondered at that great excitement should prevail in the town; but I believe that the feoffees have honestly discharged their duties. This petition comes from a town's meeting, at which they have been misled. I therefore move that the petition be not received, and that the school be left in the hands of the feoffees. The speaker then explained the effects and intents of the Municipal Act, as to charity trustees.

"Mr. Roberts seconded the amendment.

"Mr. John Watson thought it strange that by Mr. Harvey's proposition it should appear that the town could not choose one single man as mayor fit to be a feoffee.

"Mr. Boycot, jun., rose to correct Mr. Harvey. He denied most emphatically that any mis-statement had been made at the town's meeting, as all the remarks made there were drawn from authentic documents, which he had perused. The town petition ought to be treated with the respect it so well deserved.

"Mr. H. Brinton, in reply, said—I was at the town's meeting out of respect to the town. I deny making any mis-statement at that meeting. I do not think any man, let him be ever so respectable, can be free from criticism on these occasions; and any man that finds himself wronged ought to

petition against it. I beg to inform you that the lord bishop has replied to the town's-meeting petition, presented to him by the mayor, saying he would, as soon as possible after Christmas, name a day to meet the complainants.

"Mr. Harvey explained, and again asserted that the public were misinformed.

"Mr. Brinton hereupon remarked that he (Mr. Harvey) was certainly misinformed.

"Mr. Best produced the *Worcestershire Chronicle*, and read Mr. Brinton's speech, remarking that the feoffees were censured therein.

"Mr. Watson called the meeting back to their subject.

"The mayor then put the motion as proposed by Mr. H. Brinton, seconded by Mr. Tudor; also the amendment, proposed by Mr. Harvey and seconded by Mr. Roberts.

"The town-clerk explained that a petition would not be sufficient.

"Mr. Grosvenor had no objection to the mayor being a feoffee, and indeed wished it, but not at a considerable expense.

"Mr. Boycot, jun., said they were out of order. No expenses could be incurred till a special meeting was called; but the motion must take precedence.

"Mr. Best confirmed Mr. Boycot's views. No doubt they were all of opinion that the mayor should be a feoffee. It would be a future question as to whether the feoffees or the town council should incur the expense.

"The votes were then taken.

"*For the amendment.*—Messrs. Burrows, Harvey, Roberts, Woodward, and Barber.

"*Against the amendment.*—Messrs. Nichols, Boycot, sen., Best, Bradley, Turton, Yeates, Kitely, Tudor, Nettleship, Boycot, jun., Grosvenor, Watson, and Brinton.

"*Neutral.*—The mayor.

"*Absent.*—Messrs. George Hooman, James Hooman, John Hooman, Thos. Holmes, and H. J. Dixon.

"Mr. H. Brinton then, in explanation, said—I went to the town's meeting, and made some remarks, and at that time said if I should say anything offensive I should regret it. At that meeting no dissentient voice was heard. I have not read nor revised my speech. I do not think a more moderate speech, or more free from offence, could be made, and I appeal to the deputy-chairman for confirmation thereof.

"Mr. Tudor.—I beg to say that no intemperate observation was made at that meeting by Mr. Brinton or others.

"Mr. Best.—I went according to the report. I could not think any per-

son could attack the feoffees there, and if I could think that they were to blame I should resign. I believe the feoffees will come out with clean hands.

"Mr. Boycot, jun., moved, that when the memorial was drawn up by the town-clerk it should, before it was presented, be submitted to the revision and approval of the mayor and Mr. H. Brinton.

"Mr. Turton seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously, and the meeting separated."

In order that the petition to the feoffees from the town's meeting should be duly presented, the following letter was sent to the senior feoffee :—

"To *W. Boycot, Senior, Esq., the Senior Feoffee of the Free Grammar School.*

"We, the undersigned, do hereby respectfully request you to call an early meeting of the feoffees of the free grammar school, for the purpose of enabling the deputation from the committee appointed at a town's meeting to present a memorial to the feoffees, and to hear the complaints of the inhabitants against the proceedings of the feoffees.

"Signed, &c., &c."

The feoffees, at their meeting, 20th December, 1848, refused to meet this deputation, as will be seen by their resolution in their minute-book, to the following effect :—

"Resolved unanimously,—That the feoffees decline receiving any deputation from a meeting of the town, held on the 1st December last, they having acted wholly according to the directions of the Court of Chancery."

The three county newspapers and the *Daily News* published full and fair reports of the town's meeting. The only paper that inserted any opposition remarks was the *Ten Towns Messenger*, a Kidderminster weekly. The article therein, and my reply to it, were as follows :—

Thursday, December 14, 1848.

Hitherto we have studiously avoided the insertion of a line in reference to the Grammar School question, so much agitated in this town during the past six months : we were, at the outset, solicited to open our columns for a free discussion of the question ; but, as we did not choose to do so, we have, up to this period, abstained from taking part in proceedings which we judged to be more calculated to disturb the peace of the inhabitants, to set friends at variance, make enemies, give occasion for suspicion, vituperation, and abuse, than to work any beneficial change : and because the matter, so

far as it has proceeded, has not been calculated to divest us of that idea, we still adhere to the determination of taking no part in the strife further than is essential for the purpose of disabusing the public of the most erroneous personal view with which the *Daily News* has clothed the subject, and we do so the more readily because our respected contemporary the *Worcester Herald* has adopted their remarks.

We are convinced not one of our readers acquainted with him will, for one moment, believe the charges made against the head master in the *Daily News* of Wednesday, and repeated in substance in the *Herald* of Saturday, can be substantiated; but, as that gentleman is to very many of them a perfect stranger, we are desirous of putting the matter in its true light. The charges are, as reprinted by the *Herald*, as follow:—

“Although the annual revenue arising from the estates is about £700 per annum, the present head master, the Rev. W. Cockin, has, by various applications to the Court of Chancery, settled the rules of the school upon a basis which now gives great dissatisfaction to the inhabitants. Mr. Cockin has now another petition, filed on the 11th ult., for the approbation of the Lord Chancellor, the object of which seems to be to extend the petitioner's means of keeping the free boys from the school, inasmuch as it proposes that he shall have power to admit or exclude applicants, according to the special circumstances of the case, and that there shall be only four meetings in the year of the master and feoffees, at which the application of parents for the admission of boys can be taken into consideration. The main object seems to have been to drive the free boys from the school altogether. At the present time there are only sixteen in the school. There are a large number of boarders (strangers) not on the foundation, but who appear to have participated in all the advantages of the school, receiving nearly all the prizes at the examination, and for whose accommodation, jointly with the head master's, a new school-house has been erected out of the town, notwithstanding that the old one has been in every way eligible. The sons of Dissenters have been systematically excluded, and an attempt has been recently made to exclude the sons of tradesmen.”

Now we acquit both the *Daily News* and the *Herald* of any intention to make groundless charges; neither of them know the facts of the case; both are led away by hearsay, and both will be, we doubt not, somewhat surprised when we assure them the paragraph we quote is quite false, and that no person in this town was more aware of the falsehood than the man who gave utterance to the lie; the nearest approach to truth in the paragraph is that the boarders did, at the last examination (for that is the one referred to,) carry off most of the prizes; but, it should be added, in doing so they received not one farthing's worth of the property of the charity;

the prizes were the gift of the head master and two friends; the charity did not contribute a penny towards their purchase.

The question is simply as to the character of the school—whether a first-class education is adapted to the wants of the inhabitants of the town appears to us to be the only legitimate consideration—the whole discussion must be narrowed into this compass, and when it is so, we think the inhabitants have a right to discuss it; but we deprecate the abuse of the masters, who have nothing to do with it; they are appointed to fulfil the behest of the feoffees—have no power to make rules, to admit or refuse boys—have no discretion as to charges; their duty is to superintend the education of the pupils in accordance with the provisions of the scheme applied for by the feoffees and sanctioned by the Court of Chancery. If that scheme, made five years since, and submitted to the inhabitants of the town, does not accord with the wants or wishes of the townspeople, by all means let it be revised; but in order to accomplish that, we can see no possible excuse for investing the discussion with offensive personalities.

It is somewhat surprising that a London daily paper should fall into the egregious error of supposing the Court of Chancery would sanction a scheme emanating from the master, when the Court has appointed a number of gentlemen as trustees of the property. The *Daily News* ought, before they give currency to such reports and embody them in their editorial remarks, to reflect that, however dilatory the proceedings of that Court may be, the officers are not accustomed to conduct their business in so disreputable a way. Our contemporary should be aware that no alteration could be made in the rules of the school without the express sanction of each individual feoffee; therefore, the most grave charge in the catalogue turns out to be so much nonsense, spoken to deceive and blind those who do not know, or do not give themselves the trouble of investigating what degree of reliance can safely be placed on such assertions made at random.

Kidderminster, Dec. 16, 1848.

To the Editor of the *Worcestershire Chronicle*,

SIR,—As I was the only speaker at our town's meeting who touched upon the sore point of the twenty-one prizes awarded to the boarders at the distribution last June in our Grammar School, I presume I may consider myself the object of the very gentlemanly rebuke contained in the *Ten Towns Messenger* of yesterday's date.

I also presume that, whether an editor writes his own leading articles or not, he is responsible for their contents. I have no desire to quarrel with a man in filling the office whereby he gets his livelihood, so long as he does not misrepresent me; but no man can sit under the imputation of false statements when he is not guilty. The editor in this case (or his incognito)



quotes an article from the *Worcester Herald*, and then charges me with stating *what does not appear* in the article itself; but even if it did, should I be held responsible for others' mistakes? Look at the two Worcester papers (the *Journal* and your own,) and the *Ten Towns Messenger*, and it will be found that *I do not say* that the boarders' prizes were paid for out of the annual £30.

He takes credit for abstaining from meddling with the Grammar School question heretofore; *but the truth is, he refused to insert anything from me without being paid for it as an advertisement.* This caused me to publish in pamphlets, which created a much better circulation of our grievances, without cost, than if inserted in his paper.

I have no doubt the real cause of the accusation is the wish to drag me into a personal quarrel, but at present I have neither time nor inclination to do so; the exasperation of the article shows this, but it will not do just yet—

“We'll wait a little longer.”

But the writer is not satisfied with accusing me wrongfully; he commits several *faux pas* himself. He deprecates the abuse of the masters; the second master has never even been censured. He says *they* have only to obey: how, then, came the head master to petition the Court of Chancery? Could not the feoffees, who are the executive, petition? The names in the petition, dated the 7th of March, 1848, are the Rev. W. Cockin and the Rev. T. L. Claughton, and it goes on to say—“Your petitioners therefore humbly pray your Lordship that the said agreement *between* your petitioner, T. L. Claughton, and the said feoffees, be confirmed by this honourable Court, and that it be referred to the master of this Court, to whom the matter stands referred, to examine and approve of A NEW SCHEME for the future regulation and government of the said Free Grammar School, &c. &c. &c.” And this petition is thus signed—

“WM. COCKIN,

(In the presence of E. J. C. Browne.)

T. L. CLAUGHTON,

(In the presence of Thomas Hallen.)”

Now the NEW SCHEME, as styled in the above petition, was filed no later than the 11th of November, and this scheme ordains that the Greenhill Farm and residence, and the old Grammar School, should be given up for Woodfield and the new Grammar School; that the feoffees “shall pay what shall be necessary for books, not only for the service of the said Free Grammar School, *but also for prizes in books to be given at the yearly examination,* provided the same amount shall not exceed £30 per annum;” that the children's parents must be members of the Church of England; that the “boarders shall pay such sums as the feoffees shall direct and approve;”

that "no other distinction is to be made between the boarders and the free boys in school hours, or as to the PRIVILEGES AND ENJOYMENTS of the School;" that on the four quarterly days "the several applications for admission *shall be submitted to the head master, who shall be competent, at a special meeting called for that purpose, to decide according to the circumstances of the case;*" and that "a list of ALL the scholars be *printed and published half-yearly.*"

Now, admitting I had said (which I deny) that the boarders' prizes had been paid for out of the £30, should I not have been justified in so saying after reading the NEW SCHEME of Nov. 1848, which contains the foregoing extracts? Are not the prizes, privileges? And when the deed orders that the prizes shall be distributed yearly, as they were last June, (but not in the proportion of twenty-one to the boarders and three to the town boys,) what must the answer be?

I think I have settled that point pretty clearly. Now for this writer's other blunders. He says the masters have no power to refuse. No, but the *head master* has. How evasive are his remarks. He says the scheme was made five years since. This scheme I have never seen. The one I hold a copy of is dated 1844. He says it was submitted to the inhabitants of the town. I have inquired about this, and it is utterly denied. He denounces personalities, yet publishes one of the grossest I ever read. He says the feoffment emanated from the feoffees. Does he know how many protested against it again and again, and have kept away ever since, from the disgust they *then* felt at the proceedings? The minute-book and their own words will testify this. And here I beg to say that I am not a censurer of the whole of the feoffees; I only censure those whose plausibility, influence, and self-interested motives, prevailed for the moment.

But why our town's paper should oppose the wishes of the inhabitants I cannot say, seeing that unanimity prevails on all hands; except it be from the singular resolve that—

"None but itself, itself shall parallel;"

or that on the principle said to be popular among the Irish bar, "When you have nothing to say for the defence, abuse the plaintiff's attorney."

Now, I may add, that our school, having been a free school, could not be intended solely for gentlemen's sons; it would be an insult to them. And I will conclude with quoting the words of an eminent counsel, when pleading in a similar cause. "Suppose the inhabitants of Kidderminster built stabling and engaged trainers at their own cost to improve the breed of horses belonging to the parish, for the purpose of running races, and suppose these trainers advertised to the whole kingdom, 'Whereas stables rent-free have been built, and the Kidderminster people pay us good

salaries, we hereby offer to take any horse upon being paid forty-five or fifty guineas a year for corn, and we engage that these horses shall have the privilege of running for the gold cups, &c., the same as the Kidderminster horses, to whom the stables and the trainers specially belong.' What, I ask, would the Kidderminster people say to such an attempt? Why that it should not be. And will they allow their sons to be so choused?

I believe the only error in the reports of my speech was, that instead of boys not being admitted after fifteen years of age, it was stated they should not remain after fifteen; but that is of small moment in effect, as there is *no such limit* on the boarders by the scheme; and why should there be any limit at all as to age?

Yours truly,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

The "Appeal" I published in October was the chief cause of the town's meeting being called; at this meeting not one dissentient voice was raised, and the votes of the town councillors, (thirteen against five) in favour of the restoration of the school to the use of parishioners' sons, had the effect of rousing the head master at last.

Within seventeen days of the former, and three days of the latter meeting, he published the following letter. Doubtless there had been many conclaves of the clergy as to its production, it being noticeable that for many mornings their visits were frequent at the head master's boarding-house, amongst which, the vicar, (who was chairman of the school feoffees by virtue of his office,) was the most regular. I recollect that at this period I had a conversation with the vicar on the question of classical, *versus* commercial, education, when he declared that he would rather have fifty boys educated for the church than five hundred for trade; to which I replied that the classical education given now-a-days included books of a very impure character, and that if commerce decayed in England, the clergy, very probably, would find their pastures rather more bare than at present.

I was not surprised at his love for classical training, inasmuch as he had been educated at Repton school, in Derbyshire. I little thought, during the Kidderminster school contest, that I should have to lead the van in 1865, in the struggle between the parishioners of Etwall and Repton, and the trustees of that

much-abused educational endowment,—the Free School of Repton,—to which the inhabitants of the adjoining parish of Etwall had an equal right for their sons.

The vicar of Kidderminster had himself passed from this school, as a scholar, to Brazenose College, at Oxford, where he was a first class in "*Literis humanioribus*," and was elected, soon after, a Fellow of University College, where he gained the University prize for the best English Essay.\* He also happened to be appointed as one of the tutors at College to the then young Baron Ward, (heir presumptive to the estates of the Earl of Dudley,) and whose only sister he soon afterwards married.

The trustees of the Earl of Dudley's properties having purchased the Foley estates in Worcestershire, which included the patronage of the parish church of Kidderminster, and of which Lord Ward became lay-rector; he appointed the Rev. T. L. Claughton to the vicarage; thus it will be seen that his success was due to the career he had adopted at College, and that his declaration to me as to educating fifty boys for the church in preference to educating five hundred for trade was very natural. He has been very fortunate since in his promotions. Such cases as his in suddenly rising to the Episcopal bench† are rare in the Church. There are hundreds who have to drudge through life in genteel penury, though much more brilliant in the pulpit than he, but cursed, as Beattie says, with "poverty's unconquerable bar."

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\* Repton School book, Christmas, 1839. (Bakewell and Adams, Burton-upon-Trent, printers.)

† THE NEW BISHOP.—The *Guardian*, (a London newspaper,) April, 1867, in noticing the appointment of the Rev. T. L. Claughton, vicar of Kidderminster, to the See of Rochester, says: The new Bishop graduated at Trinity College, Oxford. He gained the Latin Verse in 1828, subject—"Machinæ Vi Vaporis impulsæ;" the Newdigate for English Verse in the next year,—subject "Voyages of Discovery to the Polar Regions;" and the Latin Essay in 1832, subject—"De Stoicorum Disciplina." In the previous year he had taken a first class in Classics. He was also classical examiner in 1835-6, and was elected Professor of Poetry in 1852. Mr. Claughton was ordained Deacon in 1834, and was presented to the vicarage of Kidderminster by Earl Dudley, in 1841; and the following year married the Hon. Julia Susannah Ward, the noble Earl's sister.

A LETTER TO THE  
LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER

In explanation of certain Statements which have been put forth relative to the Kidderminster Grammar School.

By Rev. WILLIAM COCKIN, A.M., Head Master of the said School.

MY LORD,

The time appears to be come when it is imperatively necessary for me to offer to your Lordship some explanation of the many mis-statements which have been made relative to the Kidderminster Grammar School, of which your Lordship is the visitor. Hitherto, I have borne in silence the reflections which Mr. Griffith has thought proper to make upon myself and the school placed under my care. So long as these reflections only furnished matter for pamphlet-writing and local remark I felt assured that the matter was well enough understood in the neighbourhood to tell its own tale; but now that that which is in fact merely a personal misunderstanding between Mr. Griffith and myself has gained sufficient notoriety not only to fill the columns of the county journals, but even to be taken up by one of the London daily papers, it seems only due to myself and to my friends that the shameful mis-statements which have thus been disseminated should be contradicted and exposed. Such a course, on my part, is due also to your Lordship. The commission which decided upon the late exchange of properties was issued under your Lordship's direction; and the report of that commission was subsequently confirmed by receiving your Lordship's approval. At the opening of our new Grammar School, in June last, your Lordship presided as visitor of the school, and expressed your kind and warm interest in what then seemed likely to become one of the most useful and flourishing grammar schools of the neighbourhood. Now, if the statements which have been so freely put forth were true, they would go to prove that my whole administration of the school, from first to last, has been one continued effort to divert the funds of the school from their

legitimate object, and to turn them to my own profit and private benefit; nay, that in the crowning act of this course of fraud I had endeavoured to cloak my designs under the specious pretext of your Lordship's immediate presence and sanction. I trust I shall be able to prove to your Lordship that such is not the case.

It will be necessary, perhaps, to premise that I was appointed to the head mastership of the Kidderminster Grammar School on February 26, 1843, but did not enter upon my duties until the following August. Previous to my appointment, the school was divided into two portions, an upper or classical school and a lower school,<sup>1</sup> in which reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught. The previous head master was curate of Stone, and resided at a distance of three miles from Kidderminster, from which, and other causes, the number of boys in the upper school, to which I was appointed, was then only eight. To remedy these evils the feoffees had, in the year 1842, applied to the Court of Chancery for a new scheme for the regulation of the school, and according to that scheme the school has since been conducted. Here, then, is plainly my first unanswerable argument against my opponents, that I am simply an *agent* for the carrying out of certain rules laid down by the Court of Chancery: for the existence and framing of those rules it is not myself but the feoffees and the Court of Chancery who are responsible.

This argument, however, does not seem sufficient to meet the directly personal character of this case, and I must, therefore, endeavour to follow out the several points alluded to by Mr. Griffith, so far as they can be gathered from his pamphlets and speech delivered at a meeting held in Kidderminster on December 1.

His first and most serious objection is to the masters receiving boarders. "I was at first," he says, "inclined to favour the idea of the masters being allowed to take a limited number of boarders, but, on further reflection, I am of opinion that it would be advisable that there should be no boarders at all."<sup>2</sup> An extraordinary assertion, my Lord, for one who, *for eighteen months*,

had been making every effort *to have his own son* received into my house as a boarder. This part of the case is so remarkable, and affords so easy a solution of all the circumstances connected with Mr. Griffith's conduct in this matter, that I must be allowed to enter into it somewhat fully. In the Christmas vacation of 1846 I received an application from Mr. Griffith to take his son as a boarder. This was renewed in the summer of 1847, and was then replied to in the following letter:—

“Dear Sir,

“July 27, 1847.

“You will, I am sure, excuse my writing to you on the subject of your son, but as I feel a great interest as well generally in my school as separately in the several boys who join it, I am inclined to lay before you the grounds upon which I think it far more desirable for your son that he should be upon the foundation, than a boarder in my house: First I am convinced that it is never good for a boy to be a boarder in the same town in which he lives; the daily meeting with those who are his companions during the holidays, and, as in this case, the passing his own door several times a day, keeps a boy's mind continually unsettled, and altogether indisposes him for study. Secondly, you will, I am sure, excuse my saying that the circumstance of your being in business in the same town will, I fear, operate prejudicially to your son amongst his companions. I have given the matter my very best consideration, and, although advising you contrary to my own interests, I know that I am only acting fairly towards yourself and towards your son in urging upon you the necessity of either placing your son upon the foundation of the Kidderminster School (which you may do at a cost of £1 per quarter, and have EVERY advantage the school offers), or else sending him as a boarder to a school a short distance from home. I sincerely hope you will adopt the former course, as I am assured it would give you every satisfaction, and beg you to believe me

“Very faithfully yours,

“Mr. Griffith.

“WILLIAM COCKIN.”

If this letter, then, appeared so monstrous, as it has since been made to be, Mr. Griffith, at any rate, abstained from expressing the anger which he felt until he had made another effort to gain the object he had in view, the admission of his son to the number of my boarders. In the following October the commission sat for the purpose of investigating the expediency of carrying out the proposed exchange of properties. The commissioners sat

in public, at the Lion Hotel, and that no one might be ignorant of their proceedings, the feoffees inserted in the *Ten Towns' Messenger* of October 15, 1847, the following advertisement:—

"KIDDERMINSTER FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL EXCHANGE.

**B**Y the direction of the Trustees or Feoffees of the above School, I do hereby give notice that the Commissioners for effecting an exchange of Greenhill Farm, the property of the said Trustees or Feoffees, near Kidderminster, for Woodfield House and Lands, at Kidderminster, the property of the Reverend William Cookin, of Woodfield aforesaid, who will hold their Meeting at the Lion Hotel, Kidderminster, at Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon, on Thursday, the Twenty-first day of October inst, to proceed upon such Exchange.

"Dated this 11th day of October, 1847.

"THOMAS HALLEN,

"Clerk and Solicitor to the said Trustees or Feoffees."

Mr. Griffith, however, did not appear before the commission, or say a word against the exchange which he now professes to consider so highly objectionable. The exchange proceeded, and a new school-room was built, and early in May, 1848, I invited the inhabitants of Kidderminster to contribute towards the erection of some iron palisading in front of the new school-room, in order to render the site of the new building more ornamental. Now, of course, no person who objected to the whole matter of the exchange, much more one who regarded it as a sacrifice of school property—as an injury to the inhabitants of the town—and as an unbearable nuisance to the town boys who had to attend there; none who entertained such opinions, and these are the opinions broached by Mr. Griffith on the first of July, could conscientiously advance the work in hand by contributing money towards it: and yet, strange to say, *Mr. Griffith was one of the very first who sent in a subscription of Five Pounds towards the railings*, in the first week of May, 1848. Further than this, on Saturday, June 24, so far as my recollection will serve me, but certainly within a day or two of that date, Mr. Griffith called, late in the evening, at my house, and, *apparently*, with friendly intention, communicated to me the ill state of feeling which was springing up in the town against the participation of boarders in exhibitions,



which it was then in contemplation to found: and, after much conversation, he renewed his request that I would receive his son as a boarder. I repeated to him my objections, and he soon after left my house; whilst on the steps, he once again asked me if I could not take his son, and I once again declined; we then parted. At this moment the truth seems to have suddenly flashed across Mr. Griffith's mind. In one week after (July 1) he published his first pamphlet. The new school-room,<sup>3</sup> towards the adornment of which he had lately so liberally contributed, was a grievance which could not be borne. The master's boarders, whose numbers he had been trying, for eighteen months, to augment by the addition of his own son, were to be swept away as an encroachment on the privileges of the town; and one who had long been anxious to pay fifty guineas a year for the education of *one* son groaned under the oppressive charge of £1 a quarter, placed by the scheme on each town boy, as subjecting him to the "heavy annual tax" of £12<sup>4</sup> per annum for *three* sons.

To give a collected view of the case, Mr. Griffith's proceedings in connexion with myself and the school have been as follows:—

1846, Christmas Vacation.—Mr. Griffith applies for his son to be admitted as a boarder.

1847, April 7, 16, and 23.—*Three months'* notice given by advertisement of intention on the part of feoffees to apply for exchange Commission.

1847, July.—Mr. Griffith renews his application, and receives the letter given above.

1847, October 15.—Advertisement inserted of the intended sitting of the Commission to inquire into the expediency of exchange.

1847, October 21 and 23.—The Commission sits. Mr. Griffith has no statement to make adverse to the exchange.

1848, May.—Mr. Griffith contributes £5 towards carrying out the completion of the New Grammar School.

1848, June 24.—Mr. Griffith calls on Mr. Cockin and renews his application for the admission of his son as a boarder.

1848, July 1.—Mr. Griffith publishes his first pamphlet, and commences his attack upon boarders altogether, and the whole management of the school.

To return, however, to Mr. Griffith's first complaint, he considers it a grievance that boarders should be allowed at all. After what has been said we shall be better able to see the full meaning of his remark :—"I was at first," (*i.e.* whilst he hoped to have his own son among the number) "inclined to favour the idea of "the master's being allowed to take a limited number of boarders; but, on further reflection," (*i.e.* on finding that he cannot get his own son taken,) "I am of opinion that it would be advisable "that there should be no boarders at all." As regards the general question of boarders, it is superfluous for me to advance any remarks upon that head, inasmuch as the Court of Chancery has decided that the masters shall take such number of boarders as the feoffees shall think fit; and that "no distinction shall be made between the boarders and day boys in school hours, or *as to the privileges and enjoyments of the school.*" But, besides the fact that the being allowed to receive boarders stimulates a master's exertions and gives fresh impulse to his efforts to raise the character of the school, and moreover excites a greater spirit of competition in the classes, there are certain cases in which even those who affirm that it is an evil, must allow that it is a necessary evil; in those cases, that is to say, where the foundation of the school cannot supply anything like an adequate remuneration for the very laborious employment of a master. At Kidderminster, I am sorry to say that *facts* are wonderfully at variance with the bright picture which Mr. Griffith has drawn of the flourishing state of the head master's receipts. It so happens that, on the eighth of this month, I had to state my case, on appeal, before the Commissioners of Income Tax, and am, therefore, in a position to give the particulars of the net proceeds of the head mastership without fear of contradiction. Supposing, then, that boarders were *not* allowed; my salary is £240 per annum, to which add the amount of quarterage for one year to Midsummer last, £71—total income, £311; deduct, as allowed by com-

missioners, disbursements, bad debts on town boys, and salary and board of writing master,<sup>5</sup> £117 7s., rates and window taxes of Woodfield, £60,=£177 7s., and, after deducting that sum, my clear receipts from the Grammar School would be £134 per annum; a sum which I should think that even Mr. Griffith would not consider quite enough to support the respectability of the head master of an important Grammar School. Without boarders, then, no man can hold the appointment; but with them, I regret to say that it is not nearly so profitable a post as Mr. Griffith represents it. He has been liberal enough to estimate my net income from the Grammar School at £1,320 per annum. The *Daily News* follows in the same track; in fact, according to that authority, my income is of unknown amount:—"The precise amount of the money drawn annually from the endowment of this school by the Rev. William Cockin, its head master, does not appear to be very well known (?), but it is estimated at £400 per annum;" and again:—"The income of the head master of this school (inclusive of the sum received from his boarders) is not much less than £1,300 a year."<sup>6</sup> Now, to prove the utter falseness of these assertions, and all arguments against boarders founded upon them, I assert that, on the eighth of this month, I proved to the entire satisfaction of the Income Tax Commissioners that the amount of my net income from the school, for the year ending at Midsummer last, including salary, quarterly payments, and boarders, was £630 7s. 3d. not quite half of the sum put forward by Mr. Griffith.

Mr. Griffith, however, not only argues against boarders in the abstract but professes to enumerate certain points, in which, in this particular case, favour is shewn towards the boarders to the prejudice of the town boys; so far as I can gather them they are these:—

1st,—There is a superiority in the boarder's education.

2ndly,—They are not restricted as to times of admission into the school and age when admitted.

3rdly,—They have been allowed to carry off the greater part of the prizes, which, being purchased from the Funds of the Trust,

ought to have been given exclusively to the town boys ; and on the occasion of the opening of the New Grammar School, two boarders were selected to recite the prize poems, to the exclusion of the town boys.

1st,—As regards the first of these points, the whole argument of Mr. Griffith's first pamphlet turns upon the abstract question of whether the education insured by sending a boy to school as a boarder be not superior to that gained by placing him in the same school as a day boy ? On this point much may be said on either side ; but what has it to do with the present matter ? If the education given to the day boys of the Kidderminster school is as good as can be given in the six hours a day allotted to their studies—if the masters are always at their posts—if, giving up all occupations and amusements, they devote themselves unceasingly to the work of the school—in such a case what right has the parent of any town boy to complain if, whilst his boy's education is as good as a day boy's education can be, still, through the master's conscientious care and vigilance<sup>7</sup> out of the general school hours, the education of the boarders is even better ? What right has Mr. Griffith to complain, when, in the outset of his first pamphlet, he says " I BELIEVE THAT THE TOWN BOYS HAVE EVERY ATTENTION PAID TO THEM THAT THEIR HOURS " WILL ALLOW ? " " <sup>8</sup>

2ndly,—It is alleged as an unfair preference given to the boarders over the town boys, that, whilst the latter can only be admitted on four days of the year, and must be, at *the time of their admission*, between the ages of eight and fifteen, boarders, on the contrary, are admissible at any time or at any age. Now, as regards the days of admission for town boys, I have really nothing at all to do with the matter. Mr. Griffith might, perhaps, take into consideration that the feoffees are a body of gentlemen who, in the discharge of their trust, incur much trouble and some odium, without any satisfaction or return, saving the hope of being useful to their fellow-townsmen. It would seem quite enough, I think, to ask those gentlemen to meet four times a year for admitting boys ; but, if Mr. Griffith

can persuade the Court of Chancery to order, and these gentlemen to consent to be always in their solicitor's office, for the admission of town boys to the school, I can only say that I have no power or wish to refuse to receive a boy into the school on any day in the whole year (vacations excepted) upon his being formally admitted by the feoffees. As regards the admission of boarders at *any period* of the year, although the thing is, I grant, possible, there is, nevertheless, this very wholesome check upon such a proceeding: namely, that I have never found a parent yet who was disposed to pay a quarter's charges for less than a quarter's board and education, and, consequently, boarders are never offered except at the beginning of the quarter. The limit of age is another grievance. Mr. Griffith would seem to wish that an infant school and an adult school should be engrafted upon the Grammar School. Boys, according to his theory, should be allowed to enter the school *at any age their parents choose*: thus, we should have on the one hand infants, of two or three years old, brought to be taught their letters; and, on the other hand, adults, of from twenty to thirty or even forty, who may wish to improve themselves, applying to be instructed in such branches of learning as they have an inclination for. What two masters could undertake to conduct and regulate such an educational Babel? With respect to my own boarders, whilst I should never think of receiving one under eight years of age, I am far more particular than the scheme obliges the feoffees to be, in seldom or ever receiving a boy who is above *fourteen*. I think, however, that it will be seen that the grievance, as regards times of admission and limits of age, is merely a visionary one. I will only on this head contradict a few gross mis-statements. Mr. Griffith says:—"Whilst I was in London I discovered that this "new scheme was just on the stocks, for which the Rev. W. Cockin is a petitioner, which proposes to alter the age beyond "which day scholars should be *permitted to remain in the school* "to fifteen years, one year less than the present one."<sup>9</sup> Untruths crowd so upon one in this passage that it is difficult to arrange them in any order. This "New Scheme" is a very wonderful

discovery, for neither the feoffees, the masters of the school, nor the Court of Chancery know of any *new scheme*. The error can only be accounted for on the ground that the exchange of properties rendered it necessary to *amend the old scheme* of 1844, as regards my residence and salary, and the change of school-rooms.<sup>10</sup> *This has been done*; and it so happens that the scheme thus amended received the *final sanction* of the Court on the 11th of November last, the day, I presume, upon which Mr. Griffith was in London. It is true that I *joined in* a petition to the Court for this amendment, because, as my *residence was to be altered and my salary decreased*, it was necessary that I should, as a matter of form, be a party to the petition for such alterations. But Mr. Griffith's inference, that these amendments were procured *through my petition*, is nothing to the monstrous assertion of the *Daily News*, that I have, "*on my own petition*," obtained *several New Feoffments* from the Court of Chancery, to the great injury of the town boys.<sup>11</sup> Strange notions such persons must have of the power of a head master, who is tied down to a certain rule of conduct by stringent regulations; of the torpidity of sixteen feoffees, *all resident on the spot*, and frequently meeting to consider the affairs of the school; and of the pliability of the Court of Chancery, which would grant *New Feoffments* on the petition of a head master. Another assertion, utterly false, is, that *any alteration* has been made in the ages of admission. The limits fixed by the scheme of 1844 were eight and fifteen years, and these still continue the same. But far more extraordinary and utterly unfounded is the assertion, that no boy can *be permitted to remain in the school* after fifteen. During my mastership two young men from among the town boys, and probably the only two for many years past, went to the Universities of Oxford and Durham; the one remained in the school till upwards of eighteen, and the other till he was *above twenty* years of age; and if any one chose to remain till he was fifty years of age I do not know that there is any power to prevent him. Akin to these is the further discovery, that in this *new scheme*, there is a clause which gives me "the option of refusing any town boy

I may choose," or according to the *Daily News*—"a right to admit or exclude town boys from the school according to the special circumstances of the case."<sup>12</sup> Now in the admission of boys to the school I am simply a *channel through which* the inhabitants are to submit the names of their sons to the feoffees, nor have I ever had, or sought, or even desired so invidious a power as that which would enable me to withhold from the feoffees the name of any boy given in to me to be submitted to their approval. The clause as it stands in the Scheme of 1844, and which I will affirm has never been *sought* to be altered, is as follows :—"That there shall be four appointed times in each year for the admission of scholars, viz.—the last Mondays in the months of January, March, July, and September, on which days the several applications for admission shall be submitted by the Head Master to the Feoffees who (*i.e.* the feoffees) shall be competent at a special meeting to be called for that purpose to decide according to the circumstances of the case. And that no boy be admitted into the school who is less than eight or more than fifteen years of age." It seemed only right to expose these falsehoods, and yet in doing so I have been kept longer than I could have wished from the third complaint as regards the boarders.

3.—It is said the boarders have carried off the greater part of the prizes, which *being purchased from the funds of the trust, ought to have been given exclusively to the town boys.* "I make no objection," writes Mr. Griffith, "to the boarders for bearing away twenty-one prizes out of twenty-four, as I dare say they deserved them. I believe the town boys have every attention paid them that their hours allow, but I will not admit on any ground the right of the boarders to compete for the annual prizes." I sincerely thank Mr. Griffith for his admissions in this passage: he admits then that the prizes were given *fairly*, "I make no objection to the boarders having them, for I dare say *they deserved them*;" in fact, so strictly impartial is the system of daily marks throughout the school, that I defy any one to bring a charge of unfairness, and more especially at the yearly examination, when the work is

conducted by an unprejudiced examiner. He admits also that no pains were spared on the part of the masters towards the town boys—" *I believe that the town boys have every attention paid them that their hours will allow.*"<sup>13</sup> Nay, my Lord, they have more than those hours, for, for some weeks before last Midsummer, when I was going through their examination work with the two senior classes at extra hours, I invited the town boys of those classes to attend at my house to join them, and they did so attend, the town boys of the fourth class two evenings, and those of the third class other two evenings every week; who then has any just cause for complaint, if when all is fair, and *all is done for the town boys that can be*, the boarders beat them; the ground of complaint is the false assertion that the prizes thus competed for are purchased from the funds of the school property, and as provided from that source, ought to be appropriated exclusively to the town boys.<sup>14</sup> "He (Mr. Griffith) dare say many of his hearers could recollect "how very liberally the prizes were given to the boarders, (*i.e.* "at the annual examination, in June last), and he should like to "know who paid for these prizes? In the year 1844 there was "an order made by the Lord Chancellor that £30<sup>15</sup> a year should "be allowed for the free school books and prizes; now they "themselves had paid for every book they had had, and he found "that there were only three prizes given to the town boys; was "that £30 laid out in those three prizes? he should like to know "whether it was not rather laid out in the twenty-one prizes "given to the other boys whom they knew nothing about.<sup>16</sup> In a leading article of the *Worcestershire Chronicle* of December 6, this point is thus alluded to:—" *The appropriation of any portion of "the Educational fund to the reward of these boarders was a direct "violation of the original charter.*"

Now, my Lord, I will venture to assert that a more wilful misrepresentation than this was never made: when Mr. Griffith first put forth such a statement in his pamphlet of July 1st, he may have done so in ignorance, but since that time he has been told by more than one person of the error into which he had fallen respecting the prizes, and yet he dares to repeat his assertion at



his meeting Dec. 1. For from what source do those prizes emanate? It is true that there is a clause empowering the feoffees to expend the sum of £30 in books and prizes, but, from the depressed state of the funds, that clause *has never been acted upon, and the Trust Funds of the School have never contributed a single shilling to prizes*, not only during my mastership, but probably not from the first foundation of the school. From what source then have these prizes been derived which have so painfully excited Mr. Griffith's envy? Wholly and solely from the masters of the school and their private friends. No prize, so far as is known, had ever been given in the school till Midsummer, 1844, when I introduced them. One hundred and twelve prizes have since been given, four by the Lady Ward, four by the Vicar of the parish, three by Mr. Villiers, fourteen by the second master, for French, and *eighty seven by myself*. Under such circumstances as these, of which Mr. Griffith could not have been ignorant, is not the charge made against me of rewarding my boarders from the funds of the charity proved to be utterly groundless? In providing prizes I had no wish to give them to my boarders to the exclusion of the town boys, but Mr. Griffith can scarcely wish to deny my boarders the right to compete in common with the town boys for prizes supplied at my own personal and voluntary expense. I have endeavoured in this, as in other matters connected with the school, to act with fairness and impartiality, and notwithstanding the preponderance of boarders on the last occasion, there have been on other occasions a much greater preponderance of Town Boys, and the prize lists show that of the one hundred and twelve prizes awarded during the last four years, *inclusive of Midsummer last, whilst sixty-one have fallen to the lot of the boarders, fifty-one have been carried off by the Town Boys*.

Mr. Griffith proceeds:—"Mr. Chairman and Fellow-Burgesses, "as I was observing, I was present at the distribution of the "prizes in the New Grammar School, on the 28th of June last, "and saw with indignant feelings two of the head master's "boarders brought forward, the one to recite a Latin Oration

"( ? Poem ) and the other a Composition in English Poetry, " while not one of the day scholars or town boys was brought " forward." How very unfortunate that that which was, I know, received with satisfaction by most persons present should to Mr. Griffith only be matter of envy and reproach. The plain answer to this charge, if such it can be called, is, that there was no town boy in the school at that time competent to undertake such a task. The town boys are almost invariably withdrawn from the school at from fourteen to sixteen years of age, to join in the several occupations of their parents, and consequently the number of town boys in the upper part of the school is always small. Nothing could have pleased me more than to have had five or six recitations on the occasion referred to, instead of two ; it would have had a much more imposing effect on my audience, and served to raise the good opinion formed of the school ; it would also have been far more satisfactory to my mind to have selected town boys for the purpose, since the interest excited in such a case, by the presence of parents and friends, would have been so much greater, but my senior (*i.e.* in point of classification) town boy at that time was only just fourteen, and I had, therefore, no alternative but to avail myself of such materials as the school afforded me ; and, in spite of Mr. Griffith's insinuations, I had every reason to be pleased at the gratification which I am assured that day afforded to very many.

The only other remarks at Mr. Griffith's meeting relative to the boarders were made by a Mr. Samuel Broom, but, besides being utterly untrue, they are altogether too frivolous to call for any notice.

I will now draw your Lordship's attention to the second series, if I may so call them, of grievances, which relate to the quarterly payments of £1 for each town boy on account of instruction in writing, &c. Here again my answer to my accusers might be simply this, that I am in no way responsible for this charge: it rests entirely with the Feoffees and the Court of Chancery ; the clause under which the charge is made is as follows :—after stating that the school shall consist of forty

boys, to be nominated by the feoffees, it proceeds: "That such scholars when chosen shall be considered as free boys, and be instructed in Latin and Greek without charge or payment, and they shall further be entitled to instruction in history, geography, and mathematics, writing and other usual branches of education, on payment of the sum of £1 each, every quarter; the payment to be made to the head master."

Upon the general propriety of such a charge I will not here offer any remarks—it is not my matter but the feoffees'; I would merely ask Mr. Griffith whether he has realized the position in which the Grammar School would stand if all restrictions in the shape of payments were withdrawn? National and Parochial Schools charge their penny and two pence a week, but make the Grammar School entirely without charge and no parent will think of paying even one penny a week to the National Schools for what he could get at the Grammar School for nothing; and, in addition to the infant and adult departments, which the withdrawal of all limit as to age would lead to, we should next find the contents of all the National and other Schools of Kidderminster pouring themselves in one full and resistless tide into the Grammar School.<sup>17</sup>

But as in the case of boarders, in addition to the general objection to quarterly payment, altogether, specific objections are made to the working of it, in this particular instance, these specific objections are three—

- 1.—That it was imposed before it was legal;
- 2.—That it was altogether to the head master;
- 3.—That the exaction of it has pressed with cruel severity on certain widows.

1.—The first of these points is thus stated:—"He next complained that the payment of £1 per quarter had been enforced eighteen months before the scheme of 1844 allowed it to come into operation. By the feoffment of 1844 the charge of £1 per quarter was not to be made till after the 25th March, 1845 had elapsed, yet he had a receipt to show that the sum had been paid under a threat of legal proceedings in 1843."<sup>18</sup>

Now had Mr. Griffith read the clause to which he refers rather more carefully he would have seen that it relates *not to the school in general*, but to those boys who had *previously been educated in the lower school*. Upon the cessation of that school "the scholars" thereof were to have the privilege of becoming scholars of the "New Grammar School *under the terms of the schema*." Mr. Fawkes retired from his duties on the 25th of March, 1844, and minutes will be found of a meeting of the feoffees on that day, when such boys of the Old Lower School as were within the prescribed limits of age were admitted into the Grammar School, and inasmuch as the number so admitted raised the total number of free boys to forty-four, *i.e.*, four above the proper foundation, so far from endeavouring to exact what was not my due, I consented, at the request of the feoffees, that the extra four should, together with the rest, pay £1 a quarter, instead of £2, to which I was strictly speaking entitled. I shall scarcely be thought to have been mercenary in my views when I add that inasmuch as the feoffees were at that time pressed by retiring pensions, and unable to meet the salary of their new second master, I contributed for some time £42 10s. a year towards that salary, although my own salary for the first two years was only £200 per annum, instead of £300.

2.—The second specific complaint is that the whole of this quarterly payment goes to the head master, instead of a third being appropriated to the second master; the reason of which order by the Court of Chancery of course is, because the head master is bound to find at his own cost, or rather out of his quarterly payment, an assistant master or masters, to teach those branches of learning on account of which the charge is made; in addition to which, I have hitherto borne the expense of cleaning, warming, and lighting the school-room, with many other incidental charges;—always defrayed previous to my mastership by the feoffees, but which I consented to take for a time in consequence of the low state of the funds of the school.

3.—But the third and most serious charge is, that by my harsh and overbearing conduct I have made this quarterly charge

oppressive to certain widows alluded to by Mr. Griffith, and for which conduct he thinks proper to apply to me the woe denounced against those "who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer."<sup>19</sup> The cases are thus alluded to—"And "now I would beg to observe, in reference to a case stated in my "last pamphlet regarding a widow's son in this town, that there "is another widow in Church-street, who declined sending her "son on account of the charge, and there is also another who "from limited means has been obliged to take her sons away, "whilst there is between £700 <sup>20</sup> and £800 per annum provided "for their education." <sup>21</sup>

As the second of these cases is only thus briefly alluded to, I need not offer any remark upon it; but will take the first case, that of Mrs. Humphreys, and the third, where I do not wish to force the name upon the public. Mrs. Humphreys's case is thus stated by Mr. Griffith:—"There is a widow living in the Bull-ring, who by her unassisted industry has reared a family; one "of her sons was in the school when these obnoxious alterations "took place; she had been ill for some time, and hesitated, with "many others, paying the £1 when first levied: the consequence "was that she received the following note—

"Mr. Cockin will be much obliged by Mrs. Humphreys informing him whether it is her intention to pay the sum due for her son's education and books, or whether it will be necessary for Mr. Cockin to take steps for the recovery of the same.

Woodfield House,

March 17, 1844.

To Mrs. Humphreys."

"The widow paid and took away her son in disgust. 'Woe "unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour "widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer."<sup>22</sup> The *Daily News* of December, states (I conclude, on Mr. Griffith's authority) that this note was "addressed to a poor widow, whose "son was, at the time it was written, on the foundation." I will not enter upon the dressing-up of this story, by applying to a grocer, carrying on a good business in one of the best situations in the town, the description of "*poor widow*." I will confine

myself to the facts implied by Mr. Griffith and boldly stated by the *Daily News*, that Mrs. Humphreys's son *was in the school at the time that note was written*, and that she removed him from school *in consequence of that note*. "The widow paid and took her son away in disgust." Now this note was written *March 17, 1844*, and Mrs. Humphreys's son had never been in the school since the close of the previous half-year, *i. e.* about the middle of Dec., 1843 : nay, more, when that note was written he had been *for two months at another school* ; and, to prove beyond a doubt that the quarterly payment was not of itself oppressive in this case, the boy was taken from a school where the charge was £1 per quarter and placed at another where the charge was double that amount. Now whether these facts were known to Mr. Griffith when, on October 9th, he published the assertion that "the widow paid and took her son away in disgust," I cannot say, but at any rate they were known to him on Oct. 27th, for he admits them in a letter published in the *Ten Towns' Messenger* of that date,<sup>23</sup> and yet in December he instructs the reporter of the *Daily News* brought down from London on purpose to chronicle that very important meeting, to say that this note was addressed to a poor widow whose son *was at the time it was written* on the foundation.

As regards the third instance of a widow injured by this oppressive charge, I think that Mr. Griffith could scarcely have made a more unfortunate selection of a case, and I can scarcely believe that this widow authorised Mr. Griffith <sup>24</sup> to make this allusion to her. For what are the facts here ? If Mr. Griffith had taken the pains to enquire, the history of the oppression exercised by the head master in exacting his quarterly payments would have been as follows—That, on the death of her husband, the charge for her eldest son, then in the school, was immediately remitted, and one of the clergy expressed a wish to pay for his books, so that that son never cost her a farthing, either for books or education, from the day of his father's death until he left school. Two younger sons were then placed in the school, the quarterly charges for whom were allowed to run in arrear for a

whole year; they were then removed, leaving a debt of £9 7s. for books and education, for which sum the widow never has nor ever will be asked. Such, my Lord, are Mr. Griffith's cases of cruel exaction practised by me upon widows with respect to the quarterly payments.

There are only two other very minor points, which may be dismissed in a few words. Mr. Griffith has more than once charged me with having made a false statement in your Lordship's presence, by saying that at the time of my appointment to the head mastership, the business of the school was conducted in a *room* one-third the size of the new school. Whether this was a correct way of expressing myself I cannot say, but my meaning was intelligible enough to those that remembered that the old building, which *altogether* is nearly the size of the new one, was, for many years, divided into *three distinct rooms*, and that that *room or portion of the building assigned to my use* consisted of scarcely one-third of the whole, and consequently the room in which I commenced my duties as Master of what was then the upper school was not quite one-third the size of the new Grammar School. This seems too trifling a matter to bestow even these few words upon, had it not been put so prominently forward by Mr. Griffith as an instance of deception on my part.

Lastly, Mr. Griffith finds fault because half-yearly reports have not been published of the number of the town boys; but this is a charge scarcely worth noticing, excepting as showing the unfairness of Mr. Griffith's assertions. The feoffees, it is true, have not published half-yearly reports, for the same reason as they have never yet given anything towards the prizes, namely, the low state of the school funds. But *yearly reports* containing the names and ages of every boy in the school, the prizes awarded, and the subjects of study for the year, have been printed *at my own expense*, and very freely dispersed, and Mr. Griffith *knows this, and has both seen and turned to his own purposes these reports*, for from no other source could he have given the calculation of the age of boarders and day boys in his first pamphlet.<sup>25</sup>

My case, my Lord, is now stated, and I trust that the explana-

tion which I have given will approve itself to your Lordships' judgment. The attack which has been made by Mr. Griffith, in its main points affects the feoffees<sup>20</sup> more than myself; but still he has carried on proceedings to such lengths and endeavoured to fix such an amount of personal blame and even of dishonesty on me that longer silence on my part might be interpreted as a tacit assent to the justice and truth of his assertions. I have, therefore, felt it a duty to myself and to the school over which I preside to make known the real state of the case. I am far from expecting that what I have now written will convince my adversaries, but I trust that it will clear me in the eyes of my friends. Certainly those who have witnessed my labours for the good of the school during the past five years must confess that, however short I may fall in ability for my task, I have not been wanting in zeal and perseverance, or well-intentioned effort with a view to raise the school to that position which it ought to occupy. Above all, I can safely appeal to the many inhabitants who have had their sons under my instruction that I have never neglected the *town boys*. Not only, according to Mr. Griffith's own admission, has "EVERY ATTENTION BEEN PAID THEM THAT THEIR HOURS WILL ALLOW," but I have voluntarily incurred much extra pains with a view to their good. Thus, as Mr. Griffith knows, *for his son has attended on these occasions*, I have, for the last three years, devoted an hour every Sunday for the religious and spiritual instruction of any of the *town boys* who like to attend me, and by far the greater portion have gladly and perseveringly availed themselves of this opportunity, and, I believe, felt interest in and derived benefit from such instruction. Again, with a view to the advantage of the *town boys*, with a view to keep up a connexion with those who had left the school, I established and kept on unceasingly for three years and a half, lectures, every alternate Tuesday, on historical and similar subjects. It has also been a source of great satisfaction to me that there has always existed throughout the school a more entire absence of jealousy and unkindly feeling between the boarders and town boys than I have ever witnessed in any similar case.



Such then, my Lord, is the account which I am enabled to render to your Lordship, as our visitor, of my conduct as head master of the Kidderminster Grammar School, and, in spite of Mr. Griffith's personal animosity, and unfounded assertions, I trust that this school may still become, through my instrumentality, a place where true religion and useful learning shall flourish and abound.

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Very obedient and faithful Servant,

WILLIAM COCKIN.

Woodfield House, December 18, 1848.

#### NOTES TO THE

#### HEAD MASTER'S PAMPHLET.

<sup>1</sup> There is a very mistaken notion prevalent about what is called a COMMERCIAL education; and much fault is found respecting the present system of the Grammar School because it is too classical—I have even heard it affirmed that no English is taught in it. Now, I believe that by a commercial school is meant one wherein NOTHING is taught but reading, writing, and accounts, geography, and history. But I cannot see that this is better than a Grammar School, in which THESE ARE FULLY TAUGHT AND AT THE SAME TIME the foundation laid for a good classical education. I will venture to affirm that few schools give more attention to such branches of education than the Kidderminster Grammar School, especially in the lower forms—thus the first class give two hours and a half daily to writing and arithmetic, geography, and history; they are even exercised in reading and spelling EVERY DAY.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Griffiths' Speech, as given in the TEN TOWNS' MESSENGER of December 8.

<sup>3</sup> The WORCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE has the assurance to state on this head that "a new school has been erected AT AN ENORMOUS COST TO THE FUNDS OF THE FOUNDATION, for the better accommodation of the boarders." Now, it is well known that neither the new school, nor the legal expenses, nor any other thing connected with the exchange, has cost "the funds of the Foundation" a single penny. The expenses incurred, as nearly as they can

be at present estimated, are a little more than £2,200; of which was contributed by the town for iron railings, £108; by subscriptions for general purposes, including a few sums from the parents of the boarders, £141; by the Vicar of Kidderminster, £1,225; and by myself the remaining balance of about £750. These items are not given as exact, but as soon as the accounts can be closed they will be submitted to the feoffees, to be audited by them.

4 Mr. Griffith says £18, and generally speaks of the quarterly charge as being £6 a year whereas it is £4. The sum of £6 is, I believe, made up by an assumption of the cost of school books, which Mr. Griffith argues should be supplied by the feoffees. If a boy continued in the school many years, the average cost of books and stationery, for several years together, might be £2 per annum; as books become more expensive in proportion to a boy's advancement.

5 It might be objected that the second master, on the foundation, should teach writing and arithmetic; but this could not be expected under existing circumstances, as the present second master was appointed to assist in the classical and mathematical instruction of the school, with the understanding that writing and arithmetic should be provided for by me from the quarterage.

6 See DAILY NEWS of December 6.

7 It is believed that very erroneous notions are entertained with regard to the extent of assistance given to the boarders out of school. Now, whatever be the case at other schools, the lessons in the Kidderminster Grammar School are purposely so arranged that the work to be prepared out of school is, with scarce an exception, that which has to be COMMITTED TO MEMORY, and, consequently, no help can be given excepting that of maintaining quietness and order for an hour and a half every evening, and seeing that the boys do during that time learn carefully the lessons to be repeated the next morning.

8 Mr. Griffith's pamphlet of July 1, p. 4.

9 Or as the WORCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE has it:—"The New Scheme "put before the Court of Chancery last month conceived another restriction, "by proposing to limit the ages of the town boys from sixteen to fifteen "years, BEYOND WHICH THEY ARE NOT TO REMAIN IN THE SCHOOL."

10 With a view to make the vacations of the boarders and town boys EXACTLY ALIKE, the boarders hitherto having had one week more than the town boys at Christmas (i. e. six weeks instead of five,) the feoffees have also introduced a slight alteration in the vacations.

11 See DAILY NEWS of December 6.

12 See DAILY NEWS, December 6.

<sup>13</sup> Pamphlet of July 1, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> There is a great fallacy, however, running through such statements, for 1. The Court of Chancery has directed that there shall be no distinction between the boarders and day boys "AS TO THE PRIVILEGES AND ENJOYMENTS OF THE SCHOOL." 2. Mr. Griffith has admitted (Pamphlet of July 20) that after two trifling deductions "THE REMAINDER OF THE FUNDS ARE THEN TO BE PAID TO THE MASTERS." Now, if instead of the masters receiving this remainder, they are, by new arrangements, entitled to only about two-thirds of it, which is the case, and the other third is to be applied in other ways for the purposes of the school, such as prizes, &c., it is plain that these prizes are purchased out of what was by the Charter to be assigned SOLELY TO THE MASTERS, and, therefore, they are surely entitled to their boarders fairly competing for what is supplied from such a source.

<sup>15</sup> It does not appear to me to have been contemplated by the Court of Chancery that this sum should be appropriated to the supply of ordinary school-books to each boy—in fact, it is wholly insufficient for the purpose for if there are to be forty boys on the foundation, and each averages £2 per annum for books, this alone would require £80 per annum, omitting prizes altogether. I know that the opinion of several of the feoffees was, at the time, that this sum was intended for the purchase of Lexicons, Atlases, and other large and costly works of reference, which were too expensive for each boy to have a separate copy of, and which should, consequently, be purchased at the expense of the funds, and form a school library.

<sup>16</sup> Mr. Griffith's Speech at Town's Meeting, as reported in WORCESTER JOURNAL, Dec. 7.

<sup>17</sup> It would seem that the quarterly payment is by no means new, although it has varied from time to time. Thus, in some "Rules respecting the Usher or Lower Master" entered in the minute-book under the date of October 2, 1756, it is ordered "That the said USHER OR LOWER MASTER shall not be obliged to teach writing and arithmetic in the said Free School unless the parent of the child or children there sent to be taught the same shall, previously to such instruction in writing and arithmetic, engage and promise to pay such master, for such learning, (as the original Institution was only for teaching Latin and Greek in the said school,) the sum of 5s. per quarter." Again, under date of June 6, 1768, the number is limited, the second master being directed to teach TWENTY boys. And again, December 23, 1773, an entrance fee of 5s. is ordered for the under master.

<sup>18</sup> Mr. Griffith is singularly inaccurate, the note said to contain this threat is given in one of his Pamphlets, and bears date March 17, 1844.

19 The pamphlet of October 9, page 2.

20 I believe that the income of the trust is not nearly so great as stated.

21 Mr. Griffith's speech in *TEN TOWNS' MESSENGER* of December 8.

22 Pamphlet of October 9, page 11.

23 A letter from Mr. Griffith to the *TEN TOWNS' MESSENGER* of October 27 in reply to an anonymous correspondent who had noticed this error, contains the following passage:—"In the first discovery of yours I beg to inform you that your arithmetic deserves the schoolmaster's cane. The receipt which I hold requests Mrs. Humphreys to send her son and the cash (£1 15s. 9d.) to school on January 22nd, (1844), and the note holding out legal proceedings is dated March 17th. This is what you call *FOUR MONTHS*: it may have been taught so at the school you went to, but at the present day it is called less than two. If you are the *COCKER* of the Grammar School you must go through your addition more perfectly before you shine in print again." Now, evidently the matter does not turn upon whether it was four months or two: if the boys were taken away a single day before March 17, he could not have been taken away *in consequence* of a note written on that day.

24 Mr. Griffith is not very scrupulous about using other persons' cases WITHOUT THEIR AUTHORITY to support his own views; thus he says—"There are, I am informed, three scholars at present in the school who would have to walk from Comberton-hill and back three times a day UNLESS THEY TOOK THEIR DINNERS WITH THEM." Now, as far as regards this case, I can inform Mr. Griffith that the father of these boys not only never made any such statement, but, on the contrary, that he GREATLY PREFERS the present position of the school, and thinks the walk conducive to the health of his sons; and with respect to the last clause, it is UTTERLY UNTRUE, as they never on any single occasion brought their dinners, or any other meal, to the school.

25 It will be observed that I have not alluded to the exclusion of Dissenters from the School, my reason is because I have never hesitated to express, as well in public as in private, my regret that such a clause was inserted by the Court of Chancery in the Scheme; and such influence as I possessed I exerted to procure the suspension of that clause.

26 Mr. Griffith's estimate of the feoffees is thus expressed:—"Of the eighteen there are very few who appear personally interested in the welfare of the school (!!), inasmuch as five are men whose families are grown up, five are bachelors, and two are non-residents; whilst of the remainder the children of two of them are too young, and one sends his family to be educated at a distance; thus leaving but three whose self-interests agree

"with the whole body of parishioners."\* In his speech Mr. Griffith has even presumed to turn a kindly-expressed wish of the Visitor's for the welfare and increase of the school into sarcasm:—"I shall never forget," says he, "the SARCASTIC remark made by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, as Visitor, on the same occasion," (i.e. the day of the opening of the New Grammar School,) "when he said that he should be glad, on a future occasion, to see more space occupied by scholars and less by company. "Doubtless, his Lordship, as he looked around that gorgeous room and saw "such a large and respectable assembly, mentally exclaimed—'What, is "this town then unable to bring forward one boy to exhibit his abilities in "these respects in a school the endowments of which are from £700 to "£800 a year?' " (Hear, hear.) Mr. Griffith's speech in the TEN TOWNS' MESSENGER of December 8.

\* Pamphlet of October 9, p. 5.

## A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

Being a Refutation of a Letter by the Head Master of Kidderminster Grammar School.

BY GEORGE GRIFFITH.

MY LORD,

I trust you will excuse my addressing you without asking your permission, in reply to a Letter from the head master of our Grammar School, dated Monday the 18th.

It may seem presumptuous that a person quite unknown to you, should trespass on your very valuable time; but as the mention of my name is so frequent in the head master's letter, I hope and believe you will listen to my defence.

At first sight it would appear necessary that I should trace, step by step, the charges and denials of the head master; but as a consecutive statement of facts will meet them all in the course of my reply, I will at once enter upon them, without regard to the laboured arrangement he has adopted.

I beg your Lordship particularly to notice, that when I first applied to the head master for *his terms* for boarders, I did not live at Kidderminster, but at Wribbenhall; I wrote for his terms and received them; and he informed me at the same time that

his house was full at that period, but on the 5th of February I unexpectedly received the following note:—

“Woodfield House, Kidderminster, Feb. 4th, 1847.

“Dear Sir,

“I take the earliest opportunity of informing you, that one of the boys for whom I was keeping a vacancy, is detained for a time by illness.—I shall therefore be happy to receive your son, as soon as it suits your convenience to send him.

“I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

“G. GRIFFITH, Esq.”

“WM. COCKIN.

I immediately informed him, that my son having re-commenced his duties at the school he had been at previously to Christmas, I could not send him to Woodfield till his half-year had elapsed, and I fully intended to send him, had I not received the note as copied into the letter he has addressed to your Lordship, dated, July the 27th, 1847; (the real date was the 22nd.) But I beg your Lordship to refer to this letter in the head master's pamphlet, page 5,\* and you will find he has omitted two most important words, namely, “once again” and I have no hesitation in saying, that before I conclude I shall fully satisfy your Lordship, that he has throughout his defence suppressed what he could, and enlarged upon what he ought not, in order to mislead his readers, as he has in this omission of the words “once again.”

Before I go further, I beg to say, in order that I shall not be found fault with in this particular, that I shall take the report of the *Ten Towns' Messenger* of December the 8th, last, for my reference-book as to any remark I may have to make upon what was spoken or quoted at the town's meeting of the 1st, because the proprietor of that paper is a personal friend of the head master, and also because the reporter of that paper being a townsman, and acquainted with all the parties for and against, was not so likely to commit mistakes as the reporters for the other papers who are not residents, the papers for which they reported being published at a distance.

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\* See page 309 *ante*. The words “once again” should have appeared in the first line of the letter, between “to you” and “on the subject.”

Now, in page 4 of his letter, he says that I *renewed* my application in the summer of 1847; this like some of his other statements shews a defective memory. I will not say it was wilfully done, as I am desirous of not insulting your Lordship's penetration, nor of taking advantage of any doubtful point in his defence: but when there can be no doubt, I must claim the liberty of fully exposing all errors tending to mislead his readers, and to degrade me in the eyes of my fellow-townsmen. He says then, that I renewed my application, but I never did; as between his first and second letters, I had resolved to defer placing my son at the school, till I became a resident in the town of Kidderminster, which took place in the August following. Now, my Lord, when I first applied I lived at Wribbenhall, and therefore I was not "*in business in the same town*" where the school was. I was then addressed as G. GRIFFITH, Esq., and was urgently desired to send my son as a boarder; but so soon as it became known to the head master that I was coming to live in "*the same town, as a tradesman*" I immediately fell below zero, became plain Mr. GRIFFITH, and my son was only considered good enough to associate with the town boys.

This, then, explains the omitted words "once again." He knew at that time that he had addressed me before, REQUESTING my son as a boarder, and very properly begged to be excused for writing to me "once again" in contradiction to his former request. But, as I never have, until now, published his first letter, he had forgotten, or wished to forget it, and therefore in his copying from the *Ten Towns' Report*, left out the words "once again," to make this second letter appear to be the *only one*; and also to make it appear that I have been, as he maliciously says, "for eighteen months, making every effort to have my own son received into his house \* as a boarder." I happen to have been taught, in my youth, by a mercantile firm of great eminence, to

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\* The head master seems to forget that the house belongs to the town boys, as he is only a tenant, and the house is rented to him as a part of his salary; that he merely occupies, as the governor of the workhouse does, viz., as a servant-tenant.

file all letters that I receive, and to copy all important letters that I write; and, very luckily in this case, (which was not at that time of apparent importance) I pursued this useful rule, as the future pages of this pamphlet will disclose; and, if the head master had done the same with the letter or letters which have passed from my hand to him, my case would be further substantiated by his producing them.

Now, my Lord, seeing that the head master wrote to me on February 4th, saying that he should "be happy to receive my son, as soon as it suited my convenience to send him," what becomes of his assertion as to "my making every exertion for *eighteen* months to have my son received into his house as a boarder," \* and also, what can be thought of his assertion that "on Saturday, June 24th, 1848, Mr. GRIFFITH called late in the evening and, apparently with friendly intention, communicated to me the ill state of feeling which was springing up in the town against the participation of boarders in exhibitions, which it was then in contemplation to found, and, after much conversation, he renewed his request that I would receive his son as a boarder?" I ask, my Lord, what becomes of these assertions, seeing that his own urgent request was written only 16 months before, and that, as I shall shew, I never repeated a wish so unceremoniously denied, and which would have been so palpably inconsistent after receiving his letter in July? why this—that he has, without scruple, (seeing that you have assented to meet the Committee appointed by the town's meeting) resolved to make up a case to induce your Lordship to consider it a mere personal matter, instead of listening to the complaint of the whole of the inhabitants, at being dispossessed of that free education which has heretofore been enjoyed by them, and which, by the golden rule of doing as you would be done by, ought now and for ever to be retained for the sole benefit of their posterity.

On the 22nd of June last, I had occasion to go with my friend, Mr. JOHN BLUNDELL of Stourport, to see a magistrate of great

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\* Head master's letter, page 4.



influence in this borough, upon the subject of a new Corn Exchange, and there, in the course of a general conversation, (his son and another relative being present also,) he remarked to me, that certain persons were endeavouring to get the boarders included in the exhibitions proposed for our school, but that he was happy to see, by one of the London daily prints, that LORD COTTENHAM had decided in the Ludlow case against such a participation. Up to that moment I had never heard a word about exhibitions, nor did I know there was an old charter and a new scheme, nor had I any acquaintance with a single thing connected with the previous system, nor the new one, excepting that my son was on the foundation, and that I paid for him according to the head master's quarterly demands. Up to that moment, I thought every thing was as it should be; in fact, I had no reason to suspect otherwise; and I appeal to the four persons then present, if, after a very full explanation of the matter by the before-mentioned gentleman, of how he had had a long and serious interview with one of the most active promoters of the proposition, how he protested again and again against its unfairness—how he had been assured by this promoter that the Lord Chancellor would not sanction the scheme unless the *boarders were included*—how he had done everything, and left nothing undone, to prevent such a deprivation of the rights of the inhabitants, I say I appeal to these persons if I did not there and then express my determination to oppose, and if possible defeat, such an unjust intention.

On the second day after that, I called, as I went from home on business, to see the head master, on purpose to tell him my feelings, and the facts of the statements I had heard. He was out, and I went again in the evening, and found him at home. I entered into the whole matter in a cool manner; \* held nothing

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\* The head master, in his pamphlet, page 6, says "I called upon him *apparently* with friendly intention." I do not deny this. I thought he was doing wrong, and, as a friend, told him so, and warned him of the consequences, if he persisted. It seems that if we differ in opinion we ought to be in a passion; but I was never taught so!

back from him that I had been told, except as to who told me, and pointed out particularly the injustice of the attempt to let the boarders participate, inasmuch as he had refused to take my son as a boarder, and yet expected him, a day boy, to compete with his better taught boarders for such exhibitions. This was a sore point, and he very tartly replied that he had not altered his opinion in that respect. Now this is what he calls my request; and I solemnly deny the assertion, and wish some one had been present at the time, but from other proofs of his defective memory which I shall adduce, and which require no witness, I trust I shall shew the utter untenability of his remark on this point. I must not here omit to state that, in the course of this conversation, he enumerated various charges which had previously been made against him in the town, with regard to Mr. Harper's son, the two doors for the boarders and day boys to enter at separately, the wall dividing the two play grounds, &c., &c.; and that he was determined from that and other reasons to take the *whole of the surplus funds* to found exhibitions for his boarders alone, and that he had instructed his attorney to insure that determination.\* At this period I had never seen the old charter, and therefore could not know how far he was correct; but it certainly struck me as a very unusual power to be bestowed on a schoolmaster. Now all these circumstances shew the tenor of the conversation we had together, and that it was quite out of the question that, in such a conversation, it should have entered my head to ask for my son to be taken as a boarder. But if these facts do not shew it amply enough, I will now give a crowning proof thereof.

On my return home I was puzzled; I did not know how to counteract the exertions then being made use of to include the boarders, and I knew that time was precious in such a case, but

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\* I mentioned this to a friend of his shortly after, and he, strange to say, coincided with the head master, as to the power he had in this respect. But I found after that, in the scheme of 1844, he had relinquished this power, and accepted £300 per annum and the house, on Church Hill; and yet to hinder me from taking steps, he threatened what he knew he had not the power to carry out.

at last it "suddenly flashed across my mind," to use my opponent's words, that I could appeal to the Vicar, who was one of the feoffees. I accordingly sat down and wrote a letter to that gentleman, (believing he had the will, and *knowing he had the power* to cause such an obnoxious attempt to be withdrawn) of which the following is a copy:—

"Kidderminster, June 24, 1848.

"Dear Sir,

"From the information I have had, I am alarmed at the intention of admitting the boarders residing at the Rev. W. COCKIN's to the proposed exhibitions, which exhibitions are intended to be paid for out of the surplus funds of the Grammar School, after paying the head and second masters their salaries.

"I am bold enough to think it was never intended that the masters should have any right of claim to the surplus in the rents after satisfying their prescribed salaries; but even if it were so at the time of endowment, the intent has been altered since by calling upon the parents of day boys to pay a quarterly sum—that is, we will say, supposing there are 20 day boys who pay 80 guineas\* per annum towards the income of the masters, that 80 guineas of course creates 80 guineas surplus in the whole, and it would be extremely hard that the boarders (who do not thus contribute towards the general salary of the two masters) should have the same chance of competing for the exhibitions as the day boys who do contribute.

"I beg also to submit that the superior advantages which the boarders have of studying, at the Rev. W. COCKIN's, and together, almost places it beyond hope for the day scholars, (whose parents cannot possibly attend to them closely, as to their studies, when at home) ever to gain an exhibition; and I cannot entertain the opinion, for a moment, that the founder ever intended that boys, whose parents reside in the parish and pay all parish rates and taxes, and attend their parish church, should be supplanted by boys who are strangers to the place and whose parents have no

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\* I ought to have said £50.

sympathy in the welfare of the town, nor pay an iota towards its rates.

"It appears to many who wish the town school well, that the proposal, at which I feel alarmed, is favourable for the children of professional men, to the disadvantage of those of tradesmen: this opinion creates a jealousy which it would be well to avoid, in all cases; but I fear the contrary would be the case if the boarders were admitted.

"If the boarding-school were thrown open to town boys, it would not be so prejudicial to them; but the present head master declines to receive *resident* tradesmen's children as boarders.

"It was my chief pleasure in removing to Kidderminster, that my sons, who, with one exception, I hoped to have educated for the church, should enjoy the opportunities afforded by so good a school, watched over as it is by you, and fostered by the other clergymen in this parish; but I cannot any longer entertain that pleasure half so much, if they are to be denied studying under the roof of the head master, and, at the same time, be competed with by those who are not so denied.

"Were there no subscriptions required from the day boys, it would not be so much opposed, because then it could be urged that the funds of the school went to their education; and it would be much more reasonable, that the masters should, in that case, enjoy the whole receipts, than devote any part of them to the benefit of the boarders, who contribute nothing to the school funds.

"I am aware of the great exertions and sacrifices you and others have devoted to the benefit of the school, and unless I felt deeply the importance of my views, I should be very loth,—humble as I know I am—to say a word which could cause you the least uneasiness; and, if I am wrong, I should be very glad to be undeceived. I have seen the Rev. W. COCKIN on the subject, and told him of the objections felt by others, as I did not believe the whole of the statements I had heard, until I had done so.

"I do not intend to think further upon it until I know your

views, but thought it better to be candid whilst the proposition is young, than to complain after its adoption, which I should be very sorry to hear of.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Faithfully yours,

"GEORGE GRIFFITH.

"To the Rev. T. L. CLAUGHTON,

"Summer Hill."

Now, my Lord, there is a plain unvarnished letter, written to the Vicar, before any thing was done in the matter; and whilst my son, I would remind your Lordship, was a day scholar in the school. In order that I should be correct in my statements, I submitted that letter, before I sent it, to the perusal of the Vicar's Churchwarden, and he gave it his unqualified approval, I did this also in order that if any offensive expression might appear in it, it should be erased, as I made sure of the Vicar agreeing with me on the subject, and felt very desirous that nothing in it should spoil my suit to him.

I therefore submit with the greatest confidence, that that letter deprives the Head Master's first seven pages of the credit they were intended to ensure, and also of the venom that he hoped to instil into my fellow-townsmen's minds to my prejudice. I leave it to you now, my Lord, and to others, to say if he is correct in saying that it was merely a personal misunderstanding between him and me, especially as I had followed his advice, by placing my son upon the foundation, after Christmas, 1847; paying for the first quarter's education and books £1 12s. 6d., being at the rate of £6 10s. per annum.

I sent the letter on the Monday morning to the Vicar's residence, after seeing the Head Master on the Saturday night, and found he was from home. I then forwarded it to him to Himley Hall, as I feared the proceedings in London would be accomplished before I should have a chance of entering counter proceedings against them. To this letter I received the following very candid and satisfactory answer:—

"Himley, June 27th.

"Dear Sir,

"I quite understand your feelings, it would be too long to go into the whole case, but I will give you the outline. The school *is* founded for forty boys of the borough and foreign of Kidderminster; in default of applicants to be made up by applicants from any other place. These forty are the foundation. If there were this number of Kidderminster boys no other boy could be admitted to the benefits of the foundation. There not being this number, the question now arises, whether the boarders at Mr. COCKIN's house are admissible on the foundation. In the case of LUDLOW, the LORD CHANCELLOR has decided that they are *not*. It is now before the Master in Chancery, whether they are to be so at Kidderminster. LORD COTTENHAM's decision is on one side, LORD LYNDBURST, the former Chancellor, decided the other way; so it is a fair subject for inquiry.

"Of my own private opinion I say nothing. Whichever way the Court decides, it will always be my great desire and anxious endeavour to promote the interests of Kidderminster boys, in every way in my power.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Yours most faithfully,

"T. L. CLAUGHTON."

"I went up to London to represent the case, with the sanction of the feoffees, who, however, do not all think alike on the subject; but we leave it *to the Court*. I have only touched the general question;—on particulars, I will see you."

The Vicar, very kindly, called upon me on the morning of the distribution of the prizes (June 28th) and we had a long interview. We went into the subject, when he remarked that he represented, when in London, (I believe he said to the Attorney General) that it would be very hard, seeing there might happen to be town boys in the boarding school, and supposing they were boys of sufficient ability, that they, although they were sons of parishioners, should be shut out from competing for the exhibitions merely because they happened to be boarders instead of day boys.

Thereupon I remarked that that argument was valueless, inasmuch as the head master refused resident tradesmen's sons: this the Vicar seemed to doubt, but upon my producing the letter dated July 22nd, 1847, he found it true and seemed very much annoyed.

This, my Lord, will give you a key to the very unhappy manner in which the Head Master delivered his speeches on that very same day; and on referring to those speeches I find a few proofs of the Head Master's defective memory. He said (*vide* Ten Town's Messenger, June 30) "He need not remind your Lordship that the numbers were very small, but it had required no small industry to RAISE the school from the lamentable state in which he found it five years ago, to even its present position. When he succeeded to the Head Mastership five years since the school business was carried on in a very small and wretched room, about one-third of the dimensions of the present building; and only seven boys attended. Now there were seventeen boys on the foundation, (he was sorry to say there were not more) twenty-five of his own boarders, and six of the Second Master's making forty-eight in all. This was a number, however, lamentably insufficient, when compared with the wants of the town and district."

On referring for proofs of these statements so pointedly dwelt upon, in the aforesaid speech, I find in the copy I hold of the Report made by SIR GEORGE ROSE, dated 4th November, 1848, that the head master, in an affidavit dated 24th April, 1848, (two months before his speech) deposed, "that the room now used as the school-room of the said Free Grammar School, is of the length of 55 feet, and of the breadth of  $24\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and of the height of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet; and that the room proposed to be built, and now building at Woodfield aforesaid, according to the plans and sections will be of the length of  $58\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and of the breadth of 27 feet, &c., &c.;" and in his letter to your Lordship he now admits (page 18) that the old school-room altogether "is nearly the size of the new one;" and in page 15 he says, "on the 25th of March, 1844, minutes will be found of a meeting of the feoffees on that day, when such boys of the old lower school (mark, my Lord, the

word old) as were within the *prescribed limits of age*\* were admitted into the Grammar School; and, inasmuch as the number so admitted raised the total number of free boys to 44, &c."

Now, I leave it to any unprejudiced person, or indeed to any of the persons present at that meeting, to say if they did not fully understand the head master to mean that the old room was but one-third the size of the one they then sat in; that only seven boys were in the school when he took to his duties therein; and, therefore, whilst the facts were otherwise, they were under the impression that the new room was two-thirds larger, and the town boys had been in four years increased from seven to the enormous number of 17! but I can shew, by an affidavit made by our worthy town clerk, on the 4th day of March, 1843, that there were then 48 boys in the school. He deposed that "certain leases will shortly fall in, when it is probable such income (the school rents) will increase considerably, and that the said school is at present divided into two departments, called respectively the Upper School and the Lower School, and that the number of *free* scholars attending the said *free* school at present amount in the Upper School to 8, and in the Lower School to 40, and that the number of free scholars for many years past has not exceeded that number, "but if the school is placed under *improved management and regulations it is probable the number of scholars will be increased.*"† Now it will be seen in the head master's letter to your Lordship, page 4, that he says he was appointed to the head mastership on February 26, 1843, about one week before this affidavit by the town clerk was made; but the head master says that the number of boys in the Upper School to which he was appointed was then only eight; then why was it that he has always received the whole of the charges (£4 per year) on all the boys ever since Christmas, 1843? If he was appointed master

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\* By this it would appear that, under the old deed, boys less than eight years of age, by three weeks, were not excluded, as one was under the new scheme! The new scheme, bye the bye, ordered that none of the present scholars should be refused until Lady-day, 1845, on the old terms.

† Copy of Report, 19th November, 1844.



only over the eight in the Upper School, why did he not let the second master covenant to receive the £4 per annum paid by the day commercial scholars? I will not, here, my Lord, as he has done towards me, over and over again in his very classic letter, accuse him of falsehood, but will simply attribute it to his defective memory. We are all subject to mistakes, but in this case it may be admitted with Cicero, in Julius Caesar, where he ejaculates—

“Indeed it is a strange disposed time,  
That men may construe things after their fashion,  
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.”

To proceed, I was at the distribution in June, and heard (after the prizes had been conferred) the very excellent remarks made by your Lordship on education, and was very much struck at your words, when you stated that to be a system of “true equality, which placed the highest positions in the State open to *young men of all classes and descriptions*, provided they rendered themselves qualified by education to fill them.” There was nothing here about the prejudice of one boy against another because he was the son of a tradesman—no—for your Lordship well knew that in past times, as well as the present, the highest positions had been filled by the sons of commerce and their children. Now, I assert that the boarders have no right at all to be ever brought again into that room to receive prizes in public—it is such a damp to the town boys to see so many prizes given to those who have, no doubt, an excellent library and books of reference, as well as an usher in the house they inhabit, to push them on and improve them in their studies, to say nothing of their studying all together. The rule ought to have been, last June, for the town boys to have competed amongst themselves, and to have half the prizes in public, and for the boarders to have competed for theirs amongst themselves, and to have received them in the master's house. I care not who pays for the prizes here, I simply find fault with the bad effect it must have on the day boys' minds.

I cannot prove the injustice of the case to your Lordship more plainly, than by quoting nearly the words of a very able

counsel, in his reply before the Vice-Chancellor of England, on a very similar case, no later than the 11th of this month :—  
“ Suppose in the parish of Kidderminster the breed of horses had been very bad, and that it was clearly for the benefit of the parish that the breed should be improved ; suppose plates or prizes were offered to be run for, and a certain number of persons were appointed trainers to attend to these Kidderminster horses ; and suppose that stables were built, and grounds purchased to train them in, for the special intent of forwarding the purposes of this particular institution, and immediately that stabling was built, and trainers are got, at the expense of the endowment or fund, that these trainers should advertise for horses from all Europe, and say, send us horses from all parts of the world, and we will attend to them, and have jockeys with them day and night in the stables, to enable them, if possible, to carry off the gold cups, &c. which were intended to improve the breed of horses in the parish of Kidderminster only”—what, my Lord, would the donors to that institution say—or what can I say more germane to the point under consideration ?

My Lord, I mean to say that the continuance of boarders is detrimental to the interests of this school. There are funds enough now to pay liberally for masters to attend solely to our sons. There are sons enough of tradesmen and others in this parish to fill it full, and to produce a healthy and extensive competition ; and when I say this, need I, for proof, bring back to your Lordship's recollection that, in 1843, there were 48 town boys ; in 1848 (Midsummer,) they had dwindled gradually down to 17, and now, at Christmas, there are, I believe, but 15.

You will at once perceive, my Lord, that, had the donor's Will been attended to, the master's whole attention would have been given to the day boy—the town boy—the charity boy ; but this being altered into a salary of £240 to the head master and a house worth £120, and a salary of £100 and two houses worth £45 per annum to the second master, the question with the parishioners arises, is it desirable, even with these salaries, to convert the masters into boarding-house keepers, for necessarily

the transactions belonging to such large establishments as Woodfield must partly make them so. The profit is not got out of the boarders' education, because they receive it in common with the day boys in the day boys' school; it takes no more time to teach both than it would the day boys, unless the day boys seriously increased, but it must be derived from the difference existing between the cost of feeding, of cooking, bedding, and washing for the boarders (as they live rent free), and the 45 or 50 guineas per annum, paid by their parents. These masters are but men: let me ask, therefore, was there no difference in the preparation for the distribution of prizes—was there no remarkable and pressing interest in the masters to make a difference in the preparation for the prizes? I am now commenting on the results, not the practice. As I said before, I have no doubt the best scholars had the prizes, but how could the boarders escape being the best scholars? Do not the masters feel towards them a kind of parental affection—would they not like to see the boys of their hearts carry away the prizes? Undoubtedly they would, as much as I should mine. And I recollect that the head master's own son carried away one. And how can we expect that the town boys, who only meet the masters in their irksome hours of duty, can share in that affection engendered by a residence in the same house. I say, therefore, "reform it altogether." And do we not know that the masters must yearn after as many boarders as they can get; and, therefore, when the boarders are scattered about the United Kingdom, taking huge gilt-edged books home as prizes, does it not induce other boys to join that school, and does it not induce their parents to send them there?

One of the arguments used as to the desirability of having boarders is, that they stop in the school a long time, whilst the town boys are taken away before they are finished in their education, to learn trades. Now what argument can be stronger to an honest mind, than this, to prove the unfairness of putting the boarders to compete for the prizes. The fact is, therefore, that the town boys are anxious to leave the school as soon as they can, to avoid the half-yearly repetition of the disgrace of

witnessing the giving of the prizes to these superior scholars; and, therefore, on the other hand, youths of promise from a distance, pour into the master's house, and push the town boys—the poor snobs of the town—from the vantage ground; and return, every half-year, to their parents' residences, crowned with the laurels of victory—victory, forsooth!—the victory of certainty! Why, even yesterday, Dec. 22, my Lord, at the private distribution of prizes, two day boys and eight boarders shared them. I care not who paid for them,—the practice is the evil I complain of.

But I am told the school without boarders would be spoiled! would it be spoiled for the parish of Kidderminster? that's the question. Shall we not with all town boys have boys of promise?—shall we not have a true and equal competition?—does not the fact, that the head master states, tell against himself? He makes a tremendous flourish in page 13, and says that of the 112 prizes given during the last four years, 51 have been carried off by the town boys.—Very true no doubt.—But we recollect that the last midsummer's prizes are included in this enumeration; and in that one year, the ratio instead of being nearly equal, as in the whole four years, became twenty one to three. If the disproportion is to go on at this rate, how many will the boarders take next year? or rather will the town boys get any?

Permit me, my Lord, to suppose a case:—let this school be for none but town boys, and then instead of a boy being discouraged and seeking the office, the counting-house, or the factory, in discomfiture, suppose he shews his talent, the master would naturally communicate with the parent, and let that parent be as poor as he may, he would strain every nerve to furnish his son with educational arms: and if not able, there is many a rich neighbour who would help him. Therefore, I ask, can this happen under the present system. Let the two systems be compared, and then the question is which would be best for the parish of Kidderminster? to have a school of eminent strange boys, or a school of eminent town boys? And shall it be said, that a commercial youth is not the better for a classical education

throughout his life? Is it not a great solace when his labours are completed, to fly to some favourite classic author? Is it not a great satisfaction for him to be able to converse on an equality with professional men? We are bound, therefore, to conclude that the best system would be that which would prove the best for this town alone. Take Lord TENTERDEN for example, he was the son of an humble tradesman, and was educated in the school of his father's town, Canterbury. Suppose some stranger of greater abilities had been allowed to outrace him, he would have been a great loser, the town would have been a great loser, and the other town boys would have been discouraged.

But to return to what has taken place: I shewed at page 5 of my "Apology," that with 17 town boys and 17 boarders of the *same ages*, that the latter had 21 prizes and the former but 3; and I determined from this, to get a copy of the scheme of 1844. I applied three times for it. To the first two applications I had no reply. To the last I had as follows:

"Kidderminster, October 4th, 1848.

"Dear Sir,

"Your letter was laid before the Feoffees of the Grammar School, at their meeting this morning, applying for a copy of their Feoffment, and they unanimously declined to entertain such a proposition.

"I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

"THOS. HALLEN,

"Clerk and Solicitor to the Feoffees."

There were eight present, and as a third of the whole eighteen are constituted a quorum, that sufficed; and I am told that the deed had not at that time received the seal necessary to its legal completion. The head master remarks upon the poverty of the school, since he joined it; how could it be otherwise when several hundreds of pounds were laid out on this new scheme?

So far I was at a loss, but I went to London and got a copy of it, and not only of that one, but of the petition and the new one grounded on that petition. The petition is dated 7th March,

1848, and is the petition of the Rev. W. COCKIN and the Rev. T. L. CLAUGHTON. The head master says in his pamphlet, p. 10, it is true he joined in this petition. He stands the first petitioner, therefore, it appears, he let some one else *join him*. In this petition it is set forth, that the feoffees have no funds to repair and make fit the old school-room. That upon a new school-room being built, the old one should be given up. That "the said agreement, if carried out, will be of great and permanent benefit to the said school." That the feoffees "are desirous of altering the said scheme by establishing in certain events, an exhibition to the University of Oxford or Cambridge," and the petition is signed by the petitioners in the presence of their respective solicitors.

Then follows the new scheme, dated November 4th, and filed November 11th, resulting from this petition, and in the schedule of this new scheme (containing twenty-one clauses) are the following obnoxious alterations, of which the inhabitants have great and serious reason to complain.

I must premise here, that the scheme which sought the exhibitions jointly for the boarders and the town boys, was *wholly withdrawn* when it was found the Lord Chancellor would not sanction the boarders' participating therein; so much for the love and the interest these promoters feel towards the town boys! But hoping to gain their point at a future day they inserted a clause ordering the money intended for the exhibitions to be invested in the three per cent consols; surely it would be better invested in some town boys' studies at college. It orders that a sum not exceeding £30 should be laid out annually in books and prizes for the service of the school; that all parish boys up to forty shall pay £1 per quarter, and all above forty double that charge; that the number of boarders may be limited by the visitor and feoffees, that the boarders shall pay "such sum as the feoffees shall direct;" and last and most important of all, as follows, which I must give in full.—"That there shall be four appointed times in each year for the admission of scholars, namely, the last Monday in the months of January, March, July, and September,

on which days the several applications for admission shall be submitted to the head master, who shall be competent at a special meeting called for that purpose, to decide according to the circumstances of the case, and that no boy be admitted into the school who is less than eight or more than fifteen years of age."

I consider, my Lord, that many of these clauses are detrimental to the parishioners, and being in direct contradiction to the donor's will, ought not to be permitted to remain. The accounts of the feoffees never having been published that I am aware of, I very naturally asked at the town's meeting *if* the prizes given last June had been paid for out of this allowance of not less than £30.\* I consider that the quarterly charge is the chief cause of the town boys becoming less and less every quarter, as persons would rather pay £1 or even more at another school than where they know they ought not to be charged, and where there are such ample funds, and knowing too that numbers of our leading tradesmen in this town have been educated in the school free of

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\* The head master accuses me, in page 8 of his letter, of stating that, the boarders' prizes were purchased from the funds of the trust—he repeats this in page 11; and in page 12, he says, that I first put forth such a statement in my pamphlet of July 1st, that I may then have done it in ignorance, that I had been corrected for this by more than one person since, and yet I dared to repeat it at the town's meeting. Now, were these charges correct, I should deserve this heap of abuse; but the truth is, I never said so in my pamphlet of July 1st, nor at the town's meeting. In my "Apology," I say the exhibitions (and not the prizes) should be held for the town boys alone. Indeed, at page 4, I state, "if the head master wishes to give prizes to his boarders, let it be done in his own house," shewing that I believed that they were not out of the fund; and, in NONE OF THE FIVE PAPERS, which reported my speech, is it so stated. Finding that the trust accounts were not made public, I asked the question, "Was this sum of £30 expended in the three prizes awarded to the sons of parishioners? *If not*, let us see how it was expended; let us see the cash-book and ledger." Now I am perfectly free from these gross and repeated charges; and, as before, I attribute them to the head master's defective memory.

quarterage. I consider that the power of limiting the boarders should from the first have been adopted, and that they should have been charged for the use of the school-room, the funds to go to the general expenses.\* I consider it an additional injury to the town boys that although in the scheme of 1844 they were allowed to enter the school until sixteen years of age; in this new scheme they are pared down another year, viz., 15.

I see the head master denies this in his letter, page 10, thus—"another assertion, utterly false, is, that *any alteration* has been made in the ages of admission." As to this, I hold a copy of the Report, and it is as I say. I have submitted it to one of the feoffees, who took it with him to their meeting last Wednesday, and the mere denial of the head master cannot alter the fact. In this same copy, taken to this meeting of feoffees, is the clause allowing the master to refuse any town-boy he liked; and, after the meeting was over, the feoffee told me that this clause had been altered *since* I had been to London—that the words "Head Master" has been replaced by the word "Feoffees."

If the head master was aware of this late alteration, why did he accuse me of mis-stating a fact. It was so when I was in London, and I, when I read it, suspected it was inserted to give him an opportunity of paying off those who are seeking to recover the school privileges by a refusal of their children; and, therefore, when he found this was altered, why does he abuse me, except it be to put my statements in the worst possible light—a generous task for a minister of the Gospel—but mistake or not, I must congratulate my fellow tradesmen, that my notice of it caused its alteration before it was too late; for, undoubtedly, had

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\* In the scheme of the Grammar School for Warwick, it is ordered that all residents shall pay with their sons four guineas; that all resident boys, whose parents reside elsewhere, shall pay seven guineas; and all boys who do not reside, nor their parents, shall pay ten guineas per annum—that out of this joint fund ten guineas shall be devoted to prize books,—one-fifth of the surplus to the second master—one-tenth to the commercial master, and the balance to the head master. In our case, although the proviso is made, the boarders are suffered to escape scot free whilst we have to pay.



it remained, it would have been a very dangerous power in the hands of any man.

But, my Lord, I must not omit recording a clause at the end of the scheme of 1843, in full, as follows :—

“That, inasmuch as there have been, previous to the present time, a number of boys and scholars, not receiving any education in Latin and Greek, who have been instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, without charge or payment, and it is desirable that they should not be deprived of advantages thus afforded them, the feoffees shall have the power to allow them to continue at the said school without any payment, except of the mere payment quarterly for stationery, until the 25th day of March, 1845, when the same school is to cease, but the scholars thereof to have the privilege of becoming scholars of the said Free Grammar School, under the terms of the scheme.”

Now, my Lord, the charge of £1 per quarter was levied from Michaelmas Day, 1843, and, unless I am very much mistaken in my reading of the above clause, I believe it was not meant to be charged until Lady Day, 1845. I cannot read it otherwise, although the head master tries to cure my dulness, in page 15 of his letter, on this particular point. The point is this—we will say there were 40 boys (I cannot say exactly) in the lower school, who, it was ordered, should not pay the £1 per quarter until Lady Day, 1845, yet they each and all were charged from September, 1843. If so, and it was merely from a mistaken conception of the clause that the charge was made, let the money be returned without delay. It cannot be that the paying a demand legalizes it, if it is afterwards discovered to be wrong; but whether this be law or not, it is the rule in trade to return money charged and paid in error.

But to adopt the head master's “collected view” system, I will now give the real version of it.

1846, Christmas :—Mr. GRIFFITH applied to the head master for his boarding-house terms, to which a reply and card was given, saying his house was full.

- 1847, February 4:—The head master sends a written request to GEORGE GRIFFITH, Esq., of Wribbenhall to send his son to the boarding-school; to which the said G. G. could not assent, as his son had resumed his studies at his old school.
- , April:—G. GRIFFITH knew nothing about the exchange nor its demerits.
- , April to July:—Commenced repairing the house he now lives in.
- , July 22nd:—Received a letter *unsought and unasked for*, from the said head master, intimating that the fact of being in business in the same town would operate prejudicially against my son amongst his companions; the which letter no doubt was written when he found that I was coming to live in the town, instead of at Wribbenhall, as I and my son were the same in the one place as the other.
- , Oct. 15:—Commission advertisement appeared, of which G. GRIFFITH not knowing a shadow of its merits took no notice: (this advertisement did not invite any one to attend.)
- , Oct. 21 and 23:—The Commission sits and Mr. GRIFFITH not understanding that  $50\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land, farm buildings, and the old school-room were to be exchanged for  $11\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land, a boarding-school house, and a new school-room, did not take any notice; but had he been aware of the facts certainly should have protested.
- 1848, May:—Mr. GRIFFITH being on the most friendly terms with the Rev. W. COCKIN, and not having heard anything about the exhibition attempt until afterwards, contributed, (and should again under similar circumstances) towards the railing.
- , June 24:—Mr. GRIFFITH called to explain and remonstrate with Mr. COCKIN, about the exhibition attempt; his son being at that time one of the foundation boys; which boys he (Mr. G.) was desirous should have the exhibitions as by right.

- , July 1 :—Mr. GRIFFITH published his "Apology for the town boys," on account of the disgust he felt at the boarders being permitted to take 21 prizes out of the 24.
- , July 20 :—Published his "Digest of the Original Charter," which Charter was, a few days before, lent to him by one of the feoffees to get copied.
- , Oct. 9 :—Published his "Appeal" as to subscriptions to carry out the restoring the school to the sons of parishioners.
- , Dec. 1 :—Attended a town's meeting at which not a dissentient voice was heard.

All of which has at last raised the head master's choler, for which nobody cares !

Having now, my Lord, gone clearly through the whole matter, I may be allowed to run cursorily over the head master's angry and disjointed letter. I would ask, first, if any man can coincide with him when he says he only acts as an agent to the feoffees. Did he engage to serve the feoffees, without knowing the terms of the scheme, and without giving a helping hand to the arrangement of those terms ? Why, any agent, even a paltry tradesman's agent, always makes a party to the whole of the terms of the engagement he serves ; and can any man suspect the careful head master of not knowing the terms of his indentures, before he was bound by the feoffees, to serve under the inhabitants of Kidderminster.

With regard to my not attending the Commission, I was in utter ignorance of it, and, in fact the notice, I perceive, does not call upon any one to attend. I protest against the unfair arguments of the head master, when finding fault with my subscription to the railings. At the time I subscribed we were on friendly terms, and I knew not an iota about the management of the school, nor its funds, nor its Charter. It was not till the 22nd of June that I ever heard a word as to the perversions of the donor's intentions ; therefore, why accuse me of knowing it in May, unless it be to bolster up a weak case.

He very unfortunately for himself supposes a case, in page 7. "Thus," says he, "if I were not to have boarders," (and yet he has 34, and inhabits a house rent free and capable of receiving 40!) "my income from the trust fund to teach the town boys is £240, quarterage, per day boys, £71." From this he takes upon himself to deduct, *bad debts on town boys!* salary and board of writing master employed to teach his boarders, £117 7s.; and rates, &c. on Woodfield, the residence of the 34 boarders, £60!! leaving his clear receipts from the Grammar School, 1847, £134. Why, such a ridiculous statement never came from the pen of man. What is the fact? Let us take 1848:

Trust Salary.....	£240	0	0
Rental of Woodfield, valued in the Exchange, and cheap.....	120	0	0
Quarterage, say .....	71	0	0
£20 profit each on 34 boarders.....	680	0	0
	<hr/>		
	1,111	0	0
Less expenses as per his account.....	177	7	0
	<hr/>		
	£933	13	0

Thus, instead of £134, it becomes £933. A pretty good salary, clear of losses, and quite capable of allowing no charge to be placed on the town boys. The head master says I estimated his *net* income at £1,320. I did no such thing. Let the report vouch for it. It was his gross *supposed* income on what he *would* realize had he had the 40 boarders and 40 town boys, as he hoped and intended to have. The report speaks the truth—it is a calculation as to "*the probable income under the present scheme.*" Oh, what a dangerous thing a defective memory is!

He argues against any boys being received until they reach a certain age; I would put on a qualification as to scholarship, and not as to age, because some boys at twelve are greater dunces than others at six years of age.

Before the head master's letter was published, I acknowledged an error in the report of my speech in the *Worcestershire Chronicle* of the 20th, as to my having said no boy could remain in the

school after fifteen, instead of being admitted after fifteen, but in not one tittle else of my statements in that speech am I in error; and yet, *after* this acknowledgment, he accuses me of it!

He talks about his salary being *decreased* by the new scheme. It is a novel decrease, which instead of £300 per year, and a house worth £25, gives him £240 per year, and a house worth £120! and without which house he could not reap the £933.

I must here complain of the head master's picking and culling the worst reported parts of my speech from the *different* papers. If he thinks there is a flaw in one point in the *Journal* report he quotes it; if another in the *Chronicle*, he quotes from that; if another in the *Daily News* (whose reporter only took the heads down,) he quotes from that;\* if another in the *Ten Towns'*, he quotes from that. Now, had he been impartial, he would, like myself, have taken the one or the other for his guide.

I again complain of the incorrectness of the head master's quotation in page 15 where he says I stated that I "had a receipt to show that the sum had been paid under a threat of legal proceedings in 1843;" whereas the *Ten Towns'* reports me correctly. Thus "the charge of £1 per quarter was *imposed* at Christmas, 1843, as a *receipt* which I hold dated December 18th *in that year* will prove." But in thus misquoting my words he does himself more injury than me. I have nothing to do with inaccurate printing, and as to this case, I repeat that when the *first* quarterly charge was made, the money was withheld until March, between which time and the previous Christmas, the vacation naturally swallowed up a considerable portion of the four months; but the money was not asked to be paid till the school resumed its duties, January 22nd, and therefore the re-opening of the school until the threat, was not two months, instead of four. We well know that another school was made

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\* The reporter, in the *Daily News*, says his article was a digest of *all* the speakers' remarks, yet the head master visits me with the whole thereof! Why not address the others. Why, because he seeks to make it a personal instead of a public question, but the public will not swallow *that* bait.

use of at a heavier charge; and more shame that such should be the case, seeing the trust rents are so large. Why does not the head master contrast the Birmingham widow's case with this? Because the contrast would be greatly to his disadvantage.

But a charge in direct opposition to the truth is contained in page 17, where the head master says that "I instructed the reporter of the *Daily News* to say that this note was addressed to a poor widow, whose son was, at the time it was written, on the foundation." Now if Mr. Cockin is correct here, and I appeal to this reporter, I will pay £5 to the Dispensary fund. If I am innocent of this foul charge, then let him engage to do the same. I trust that he will either accept this challenge or admit the incorrectness of the charge. And as to the other widow it is well known that she is not rich, and therefore I say it is disgraceful that her sons should not have a free education, as there are plenty of funds, and the original Charter grants it.

I rejoice, my Lord, that he is the cause of this exposition of the case, because, as your Lordship is the visitor of the school, you will be the best judge between us; and in conclusion, I must say that such a series of mis-statements as the head master's letter contains, I never read. To address such language to your Lordship is the strangest part of the business. Were I an A. M. of Brazenose, I certainly would have digested my matter before I sent it forth as an address to my diocesan; and out of respect to your Lordship, suppressed every bitter word.

He has had every advantage to make up his reply that he could have. He has seen all the schemes long ago; knew their contents intimately; has ever since last June had time to dissect my pamphlets, and compare them with the facts; has had a college education; and yet amongst all his ill-tempered accusations has but one real error to accuse me of, viz., the age at which boys remain in the school.

But I know, my Lord, where the shoe pinches. I have drawn aside the curtain that hid the Grammar School from the inhabitants' eyes. I have shewn its right side and its wrong. I have, as DEMETRIUS said, "put their craft in danger;" and because I

would not be a silver fork worshipper, because I do not—like the Sultan of BORNEO's attendants—throw myself from my horse and kiss the ground, when men of higher rank fall from theirs, I am carped at from privileged places, and abused in print by this A.M.

I hope, my Lord, I have written nothing to offend your eye; on the re-perusal of the manuscript, I have expunged everything that I thought would give you pain, or cause regret in my own mind hereafter.

As to the head master, I wish him good speed, less spleen, more truth, and milder language. 'Tis, I know, a cruelty, "to load a falling man."

"But if we did think

His contemplation were above the earth,  
And fixed on spiritual objects, he should still  
Dwell in our musings ;—but we are afraid,  
His thinkings are below the moon, and not worth  
Our serious considerings."

I beg to subscribe myself,

My Lord,  
Your Lordship's faithful Servant,  
GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Kidderminster, Dec. 23rd, 1848.

## CHAPTER XV.

"A school, I speak from experience, may consist of about eighty boys taken from the higher and middle classes, of whom seventy-five are never intended for the University, being unable to afford to be occupied with Greek and Latin beyond the age of thirteen and sixteen. The head master, a graduate of Oxford, models the plan of instruction for all the pupils in such a way as will tell best in preparing the five favored youths to cut a figure at the University. He is ambitious that some of these pupils should carry off Scholarships, or gain first-class or other prizes, because their success will reflect credit on his school. The parents of the other seventy-five boys may wish for the introduction of the French and German languages, or the elements of Physics and Natural History, or some modern literature, but they must submit to be ruled by the standard set up at Oxford."—*Vide Sir Charles Lyell's evidence, Oxford University Commissioners' Report, p. 122.*

I sent a copy of the foregoing pamphlet to the Bishop, and in acknowledgment received the following note:—

*"Hartlebury Castle, December 28th, 1848.*

"SIR,—No apology was necessary on your part for addressing your pamphlet to me. As visitor of Kidderminster School, I am very glad to hear both sides of the question; but, independent of my visitorial character, I should be very glad, as a neighbour, much interested in the welfare of a town almost adjoining my residence, to compose differences which will, I fear, if continued, produce much mischief.

"Dr. Roden, the mayor of Kidderminster, has probably informed you that I am quite willing to name a day for going into the question officially as visitor, but that I have intimated to him that my authority will not extend to the reversal of an order of the Court of Chancery. It appears to me that the time is passed for many of the objections brought forward on your part, and that of others, against the scheme of the Court of Chancery. These ought to have been urged before the master, and before the scheme was confirmed. As things are, my duty as visitor will be confined to seeing that the provisions of the said scheme have been strictly carried out.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"H. WORCESTER."

"Mr. Griffith."



In accordance with the foregoing, the Bishop wrote to the Mayor as follows :—

*"Hartlebury Castle, December 31st, 1848.*

"WORSHIPFUL SIR,—I am engaged to preach at Birmingham on Sunday next, and to attend a meeting of the bishops in London on the following Tuesday. I think, therefore, that it will not be convenient to fix an earlier day than Friday, the 12th of January, for investigating the charges brought against the feoffees and head master of the Kidderminster School, in the memorial presented to me, and signed by you. I should be obliged to you, therefore, if you would request the parties to that memorial to attend here on Friday, the 12th of January next, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

"I am, worshipful Sir, your obedient Servant,

"H. WORCESTER."

*"The Mayor of Kidderminster."*

"P.S.—It would be convenient, and, perhaps, prevent much desultory conversation, if the charges were made in a definite form, and numbered 1, 2, 3, &c."

In the meantime, the Bishop wrote to me as follows :—

*"Hartlebury Castle, January 5th, 1849.*

"The Bishop of Worcester, observing that Mr. Griffith has published 'A Digest of the Original Charter of Kidderminster School,' would be obliged to him if he would send him a copy for perusal."

With the "Digest" I sent the following letter :—

*"Kidderminster, January 6th, 1849.*

"MY LORD,—I sent your Lordship the written copy of the original charter by coach, to-day, which I hope your Lordship has received.

"The question, in my opinion, lies in a nut-shell. The 15th clause of the scheme, dated 4th November, 1848, empowers two-thirds of the feoffees, subject to your Lordship's assent in writing, to make or alter any of the statutes or ordinances : therefore, by altering those statutes which place a charge on and a limit as to the number and age of the town boys, and those allowing boarders to be taken, everything will be done that is desirable.

"I believe the head master's benefit would be most considered by the trustees taking him as a tenant, and so separate the boarding-school from the town school. The hall where your Lordship dined, last June, would make him an ample school-room.

"I beg to inclose a copy of the clause mentioned in the first part of this letter, and if your Lordship wishes it, I will, on receiving your command to that effect, come with, or send to your Lordship, office copies of the schemes

of 1844 and 1848, which I now have in my possession. These, in conjunction with the copy of the Charter, would enable your Lordship to judge of the whole matter.

"I can also send you a copy of the properties, tenants' names, and rentals of the charity, showing your Lordship that the present rents amount to about £750 per annum.

"I remain, your Lordship's obedient Servant,

"GEO. GRIFFITH."

Before we went to Hartlebury we drew up a list of our complaints, according to his Lordship's request, of which the following is a copy :—

*"To the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester.*

"We, the undersigned, members of the committee appointed by the town's meeting held on December 1st, 1848, in Kidderminster, to carry out the restoration of the Grammar School according to the original Inquisition, pray your Lordship and the feoffees thereof to sanction the following propositions :—

"1. That no charge shall be made in future for the education of the sons of parishioners, because the trust fund is sufficient.

"2. That a liberal sum shall be devoted for books and stationery for the sons of parishioners.

"3. That both the masters' (and any additional masters, in case an increase of the number of scholars require it) undivided attention shall be given to the sons of parishioners, because we find that, under the present scheme, the number of the boarders increase, and the number of town boys decrease.

"4. That the free education of the sons of parishioners shall be both classical and commercial.

"5. That the sons of resident Dissenters shall be admissible equally with the sons of resident Churchmen.

"6. That the scheme empowering the feoffees to create exhibitions shall under certain events, be revived.

"7. That the mayor of the borough shall be a feoffee by virtue of his office.

"8. That the trust fund accounts shall be published yearly in one or more of the local newspapers.

"Signed by John Shemmons, George Griffith, Henry Brinton, Thomas Jevons, Geo. Turton, Joseph Yeates, Wm. Minifie, Thomas Lloyd, Joseph Wright, and J. Tudor."

Eight committee-men attended at Hartlebury Castle; of the two absentees, one was in London, and one could not attend.

It was a fine frosty morning as the committee rolled along the road in two vehicles. The Castle was situated in a noble park, the avenue to which was lined with fine limes. The walls of the Castle were of red sandstone, it enjoyed embattled parapets and a quadrangular court, enclosed with walls and a gate-house; and where the moat once existed, a smiling garden now spread itself.

Looking down the avenue of limes, it stood out in stately majesty and not without reason; its noble hall, beautiful chapel, and magnificent library being scarcely surpassed in the kingdom. The committee was conducted into "the Court," the hall where all episcopal conferences or disputations were held. The only person there was the bishop's chancellor, an active eyed, merry, loquacious little gentleman. Soon after the committee was seated the feoffees and their clerk arrived, and then the bishop and the proctor entered accompanied by the vicar and the head master.

I was selected to open the case for the inhabitants. Upon reading the first proposition his Lordship demurred, and said his power was confined to those clauses in the scheme which the feoffees had not fulfilled, and that he could listen to no other. This, it will be seen, prevented my arguing in favour of, or urging upon the Bishop, the correctness of our views as laid down in our "List of complaints." Although the memorial from the town's meeting to his Lordship contained these grievances, and we were called upon to defend this memorial, yet we were told by his Lordship that he could not listen to any grievance, however great, that the scheme sanctioned.

This we regretted as very unfortunate, and showed that at Wolverley School things were much more liberally managed than at ours. The founder there ordered his trustees "to make choice of an approved honest and learned schoolmaster, to keep a *free grammar* school within the parish of Wolverley, for the free teaching and instructing only of the children of the said parish, and to pay him the sum of £20 by the year. This was fundamentally the same as ours, and yet at Wolverley they educated,

free of all charge, twenty-one classical and one hundred commercial scholars, and one hundred and eighty boys and girls in the two infant schools, and the salaries accomplishing this amounted to but £270; whilst our funds amounted to £795, and we had but fifteen boys in our school altogether. Now, if Wolverley could do this for the benefit of an agricultural district for £270, what ought we to do for a commercial town with £795?

However, as it would occupy too much space to go into the arguments made use of, *pro* and *con*, we came away with the belief that the points listened to by his Lordship would be rectified; and this he did, except one, viz., limiting the boarders, which he left in the hands of the feoffees, one of whom said he would have no objection to the limit being fifty! The points allowed are, the expenditure of £30 per annum for books, &c., for the free boys; the £4 per annum to be laid upon the boarders, and the half-yearly publication of the boys' names. So far the committee acquitted themselves on behalf of the town, and they looked forward to a speedy adjustment of the whole by the Court of Chancery.

The bishop, as will be seen from the following copy, did not delay his "opinion." It reached Kidderminster on the 14th:—

*To the Worshipful the Mayor of Kidderminster.*

"At the termination of the meeting of the feoffees and head master of Kidderminster school and of certain inhabitants of Kidderminster, who had presented a memorial to me as a visitor, touching certain abuses alleged to have taken place in the management of the said school, held before me at Hartlebury Castle, on Friday, the 12th January, 1849, I expressed my determination to take the said charges into my serious consideration, and to transmit my decision to the worshipful the mayor of Kidderminster. I now proceed, therefore, to state my decision upon each of the charges, *seriatim*, as they were brought forward by Mr. Griffith, on the part of the memorialists. With regard to the first alleged grievance, relating to the quarterage of one pound per quarter charged upon the boys elected on the foundation, although this was withdrawn at my suggestion, in consequence of its forming part of the scheme sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, and, therefore, not within my jurisdiction as visitor, I am desirous of not passing it over entirely in silence, as much misconception appears to prevail upon this subject among the inhabitants of Kidderminster, which has

led to no little bitterness of feeling, and which I should be most happy to be instrumental in removing. Grammar schools, such as that established at Kidderminster, never were intended for the general education of the inhabitants of a town; they were exclusively instituted for the purpose of affording opportunities for a good classical education to such sons of merchants, tradesmen, and others, as evinced considerable talents and aptitude for learning, and who, without such an advantage, would be deprived of the chance which wealth affords to the rich of rising in the learned professions to the first offices in the State. This privilege is, by the new scheme, conceded to the inhabitants of Kidderminster, on payment of £1 per quarter, which is little more than eighteen pence per week. Whether it would have been more advisable that such education should have been afforded gratuitously to the inhabitants of Kidderminster, is not a point for me, as visitor, to decide, since it forms part of a scheme sanctioned by the Court of Chancery; but I cannot think that the inhabitants have much reason to complain of so trifling a charge for such an education of their sons as may qualify them for the highest honours and distinctions in the State. With regard to the second matter brought forward by Mr. Griffith on the part of the memorialists, that whereas £30 per annum is directed by the scheme to be expended in books and prizes, no such sum has been laid out for this purpose, it was proved to me that the funds of the school are not at present adequate to such payment, and I must, therefore, content myself with directing, as I hereby do, that whenever such a surplus remains, after paying the salaries of the masters and other school expenses, it shall be applied to the procuring of educational books and prize books, as directed by the third article of the scheme. I come now to the third charge against the feoffees, relating to the eleventh article of the scheme. In that article power is given to the feoffees and visitors to limit the number of boarders to be admitted into the house of the two masters, and the complaint made is that such power has not been exercised. Here it is to be observed that this matter is left entirely to the discretion of the feoffees, and they, conceiving that much advantage is derived to a school from the competition necessarily created by numbers, have not thought the time yet arrived for fixing a limit to the number of boarders. It is not necessary for me to offer any opinion upon this subject, since, as visitor, I should not feel justified in interfering with a discretion which is clearly reserved to the feoffees by the terms of the scheme. It is a matter upon which difference of opinion may be fairly entertained by different individuals, and upon which, perhaps, much might be said on both sides of the question. The scheme, however, vests the discretion with the feoffees, and with that discretion I shall not feel justified, as visitor, in interfering. Connected with

the above complaint was the fourth charge against the feoffees, that whereas a quarterage of one pound per quarter was charged on the boys elected on the foundation, no such charge was imposed upon the boarders. Upon inquiry, however, it appeared that £50 per annum was charged upon all boarders, which covered all charges for education as well as board. It is obvious, therefore, that the quarterage, though not specifically charged, was included within the annual payment of £50. To prevent, however, misconception, I have requested that the head master will hereafter charge only £46 for board, &c., and make a separate charge of £4 for quarterage, which will place the boarders exactly on a par with the boys on the foundation in this respect. The last charge against the feoffees was admitted by those who brought it forward not to be very material; namely, that the direction contained in the scheme, that a list of the scholars should be published half-yearly, had not been complied with. Such a direction is certainly contained in the scheme; and I hereby direct, that for the future it shall be observed. No other charge was brought before me by the memorialists, and I cannot conclude without expressing my satisfaction, that, after so much discussion in newspapers and pamphlets, nothing more material should have been brought forward against the feoffees of the school. Conducted as it is now, I am satisfied that it is capable of conferring the greatest benefits upon the inhabitants of Kidderminster, by affording to them the opportunity of giving their sons a liberal education, which may be the means of enabling them to rise to the highest honours and distinctions in the State. But these advantages will probably be forfeited, if the exertions of the feoffees and head master be constantly thwarted by that spirit of party which is always anxious to find matter for blame rather than commendation, and which substitutes angry feeling and an unfavourable construction of the motives and conduct of others for the mutual good-will and impartiality which ought to prevail among the inhabitants of the same town.

"Given at Hartlebury Castle, this thirteenth day of January, 1849.

"H. WORCESTER."

As to the bishop's remark about party spirit, that was quite improper, as the eight committee-men who went to Hartlebury were composed of four Churchmen and four Dissenters, and an equal number of Whigs and Tories. This "opinion" at once induced the committee to issue the following circular to their fellow-parishioners:—

"Kidderminster January 15th, 1849.

"SIR,—The committee, who seek the restoration of our grammar school

according to the foundation deed, beg to call upon you for a subscription towards a suit in Chancery on the following grounds:—

“At their interview with the right reverend the lord bishop of the diocese, on the 12th instant, his lordship could not hear any complaint against those parts of the scheme settled by the Court of Chancery, although opposed to the foundation deed. Such points he declared were under the sole power of the Court of Chancery to alter; but those which had not been acted upon—embracing the quarterly charge to be laid upon the boarders as upon the day boys; the outlay annually of £30 for books and prizes for the school; and the publication of the list of boys half-yearly—he has ordered to be done, upon our complaint.

“Whilst the committee deeply regret that his Lordship and the feoffees have not the power, without the assistance of the Court of Chancery, to restore the will of the donor, they feel confident, that by filing a bill in that Court, they shall succeed in their endeavours to procure so desirable a boon to the parishioners.

“The decision in the Tiverton case has abolished the keeping of boarders and, in accordance with that decision, the Vice-chancellor last week abolished the taking of boarders in the Manchester free school also. The similarity of the latter case to ours leaves no fear on the committee's mind that their success is beyond doubt.

The present rents of the school are.....£630 per annum.

Add to which the rents of Woodfield House and  
grounds..... 120

And the rent of the two houses on Church Hill ..... 45

£795

That such a fund as this should be devoted to the education of fifteen boys, the number at present in the school—(in addition to which these boys pay £60 per annum)—the committee consider to be very unjust.

“The Lord Bishop, at the before-mentioned interview, expressed himself as to the present scheme thus—‘I don't at all question but that the scheme may have been made much more perfect than it has,’ and ‘that it was a great pity that a charge should be placed on all the boys.’

“We therefore appeal to you as neighbours, fellow-parishioners, fathers, mothers, and brothers of those who are entitled to the free education conferred by the founder, and carried into effect up to 1843, to aid us, as liberally as your means will afford, in our just and justifiable intentions herein.

“I remain, yours very respectfully,

“WM. MINIFIE, Chairman.

“On behalf of the Committee.”

An information was promptly filed in Chancery by eight relators, but they, being desirous of getting an arrangement, instead of going on with the suit, the following letter was sent to the chairman of the feoffees:—

*"Kidderminster, February 10th, 1849.*

"DEAR SIR,—The committee are anxious to have the dispute respecting the school amicably settled, if possible, and they have consequently deputed Mr. Griffith and myself to wait upon you to that effect. Will you have the kindness to fix a time, either on Monday, after twelve o'clock at noon, or any time on Wednesday next, at my office, or at any other place you may please to fix?

"Yours faithfully,

"W. Boycot, Jun.

*"To the Rev. T. L. Claughton.*

"P.S.—The bill is filed against the feoffees."

Accordingly, an interview took place between the Rev. T. L. Claughton; W. B. Best, Esq., a feoffee; the solicitor to the relators (Mr. W. Boycot, jun.); and myself. At that interview it was agreed to have no limit on the town boys or boarders—to extend the commercial education—to abolish the quarterage and the disqualification of Dissenters' sons—and the relators agreed to pay all costs. When this agreement was submitted to the feoffees at their meeting, held on the 19th February, it was negatived, and the feoffees present voted as follows, the vicar, as it will be perceived, voting contrary to his assent, given at the above interview:—

*For putting in an Answer to the Relators' Information.*

Rev. T. L. Claughton	George Hooman	William Nichols
Wm. Boycot, sen.	Joseph Chellingworth	J. S. Barber
Abraham Turner	Thomas Bradley	Henry Chellingworth

*Against it.*

W. B. Best, Esq.

Therefore, the suit went on, and a Commissioner was appointed to take written evidence for and against the information, who held his Court at the Black Horse Inn, Kidderminster. A subscription, in the meantime, was set on foot to meet the expenses of the suit.



VALUATION OF THE KIDDERMINSTER FREE GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL PROPERTY IN JUNE, 1850.

No. on Town Map, 1848.	Occupiers.	Description.	Quantity.			Anl. Value.		
			A.	S.	P.	£	s.	d.
		School-room in parish churchyard .....	0	0	0	0	0	0
{ 1 part of, Robt. Chester...		Duke of York public-house,						
64		in Jerusalem Walk ...	0	0	6	16	16	0
87	Benj. Woodward..	Garden ground, Mount Pleasant ... ..	0	1	16			
88	ditto	ditto	0	0	29			
89	ditto	ditto	0	0	21	11	0	0
90	ditto	ditto	0	0	29			
91	ditto	ditto	0	1	0			
251	William Dudley...	Barn, piggery, and stable, in Blackwell-street ...	0	0	6	10	0	0
964 a to	ditto	Houses and gardens at the Foxholes (11 houses with gardens, £3 each)	1	2	31	33	0	0
963	Benjamin Wilkes..	Garden ground at the Foxholes ... ..	2	2	5	12	10	0
913 part, Richard Taylor...		Whitemarsh-field, part of, near Bottom of Broad-street ... ..	2	1	2	13	10	0
594	John Perry...	George and Dragon public-house, in Trinity-lane...	0	0	7	50	0	0
853 part, Sam. P. Hall		Garden ground, adjoining St. John's churchyard	0	1	21	2	16	3
356	Samuel Oliver ...	House, &c. in Coventry-st.	0	0	10	20	0	0
	William Jackson..	ditto				25	0	0
252	Venables...	House, in Blackwell-st. ...	0	0	12	15	0	0
	Hampton...	ditto						
	Coley... ..	ditto						
348	Henry Wood ...	House, in High-street ...	0	0	2	30	0	0
353	James Larr... ..	ditto				25	0	0
	John Bury ... ..	ditto	0	0	12	20	0	0
	Thomas Knowles	ditto				16	0	0
1024 & 5 John Lea, Esq. ...		Pasture land at the Shrubbery ... ..	1	0	34	14	10	0
1010 part,	ditto ... ..	do. part of Brecknall's	1	2	23			
Carried forward ... ..						£315	2	3

No. on Town Map. 1848.	Occupiers.	Description.	Quantity A. R. P.	Anal. Value. £ s. d.
		Brought forward ...	... ..	£315 2 3
567	... ..	Five houses in Worcester- street ... ..	0 0 19	0 0 0
		[Taken down, and the land now forms a new street.]		
1065	Frederick Green..	Garden at Comberton-hill	0 0 31	} 7 10 0
1066	Thos. Humphries..	ditto	0 0 21	
1067	Thos. Bucknall ...	ditto	0 0 22	
1068	ditto	ditto	0 0 13	
1069	John Griffith ...	ditto	0 0 17	
949 part	G. Talbot, Esq....	Part of field in Bird-lane	1 3 0	8 15 0
278	John Hunt...	House adjoining church- yard ... ..	} 0 0 11	30 0 0
	ditto	Part of garden ... ..		
279	Miss Shenton ...	House ... ..	} 0 0 16	22 0 0
	ditto	Part of garden ... ..		
1057	John Denning ...	Garden at Comberton-hill	0 2 30	5 0 0
1059	William Tandy...	ditto	1 2 19	10 0 0
1070	ditto	ditto	1 0 39	9 0 0
298 a	John Wardell ...	Shop, &c., bottom of Swan- street ... ..	0 0 1	14 0 0
597	C. L. Lucy	House and spirit vaults, Town-bridge, Mill-street	0 0 8	60 0 0
906	John Grubham ...	Gardens, bottom of Broad- street ... ..	1 0 7	7 10 0
1076	W. Boycot, jun....	Land at Cross Roads, Comberton ... ..	3 0 34	17 0 0
466	Mich. Underwood..	Garden ground in Anchor- field ... ..	0 2 3	6 0 0
517	Mrs. Mason	Lane and coal-yard, Wor- cester-street ... ..	0 1 37	6 0 0
527	Jno. Henry, Thos...	Two houses, carpet shop, Clymer, and—... and garden in Worcester	} 0 0 13	20 0 0
	Cook (Carpet ...	street ... ..		
	Shop)			
664	Wm. Fawcett ...	Twenty-one-loom factory and yard, in Mill-street	0 0 32	35 0 0
		Carried forward ... ..	... ..	£572 17 3

No. on Town Map, 1848.	Occupiers.	Description.	Quantity.		Anl. Value.		
			A.	R.	£	s.	d.
		Brought forward ...	...	...	£572	17	3
626	James Holmes	Two warehouses, drying stoves, engine house, and rooms over, in Mill-st. ...	0	0	10	18	0
654 part,	Wm. Hodgkiss	Two gardens in Mill-st....	0	0	28	3	3
643	Joseph Coley	House, top of Mill-street...	0	0	14	28	0
	Mrs. Bowyer	ditto					
	Joseph Bayes	ditto					
	Benjamin Clew	ditto					
	William Walton	Coal-yard, &c. ...					
1003 part,	James Gardener	Land, in Bird-lane ...	0	2	19	2	10
915 a }	Mrs. Garlick	Land, back of Broad-street	0	3	2	4	4
916 }							
865	William Clews	Land, adjoining Woodfield	2	0	37	8	0
866	Sam. P. Hall	Land, opposite last...	1	2	23	7	0
855 part,	The Scholars	New school, yard, &c., being part of the Wood- field property ...	0	2	4	0	0
855 part,	S. Pugh	Land, remainder of...	2	1	36	12	0
864	Charles Jones	Gardens, at Woodfield ...	2	0	27	10	0
pt. 854	Head Master of the school*	Woodfield House, offices, }	4	1	21	120	0
and		lawn, pleasure ground, }					
pt. 855		gardens, & playground }					
257 part,	Phoebe Fawcner	Three houses, stabling, yard, and garden, in Blackwell-street ...	0	0	36	50	0
	Various	Seven houses, &c. ...					
956	Thomas Pitt	Land, in Bird-lane...	1	0	3	5	0
969	William Lane	Part of close, in Bird-lane	0	3	26	4	10
969 b	...	House and garden ...	0	0	20	10	10
		ditto					
970 a }	Josh. Hammond	Garden ground in Bird-	0	2	34	4	0
& 971 }		lane ...					
		Carried forward ...	...	...	£859	14	3

\* The Greenhill farm, which was exchanged for Woodfield and the lands adjoining, was afterwards declared to be sold by the head master to Lord Ward, brother-in-law to the vicar, who was chairman of the Board of Feoffees.

No. on Town Map. 1848.	Occupiers.	Description.	Quantity			Aml. Value.		
			A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
		Brought forward ...	...	...	...	£859	14	3
149	William Guest	...Garden, bottom of Bird-lane ...	0	1	15	6	0	0
473 and pt. of 474	}	...Garden land ...	1	1	2	0	0	0
53 to 59, James Knowles		...The Dean's farm, at Comberton, foreign of Kidderminster ...	10	3	38	42	0	0
63	John Boraston	...Land in meadow, back of Barnett's-mill, foreign of Kidderminster ...	0	3	13	3	0	0
61	George Laight	...Land, in Oldington meadow, foreign of Kidderminster... ..	1	0	5	5	0	0
62	ditto	ditto... ..	2	0	0			
64	Alfred Blundell	...Land, at the Cross-roads on the Stourport-road, near Mitton cottage, in the hamlet of Upper Mitton, parish of Hartlebury ...	0	3	14	2	10	0
60	Railway Compy	...At Hoo Brook ... .. [Given in exchange for 853, occupied by S. P. Hall.]	0	2	31	0	0	0
Total ... ..						£918	4	3

Stourbridge, June, 1850.

(Signed) JOHN DAVIES, Surveyor.

Mr. Davies, although engaged by the committee with the full understanding that he was to be paid for his survey, refused when applied to for his account to receive anything for his services, as he said he deeply sympathized with the promoters of the suit to obtain a restitution of the school.

The following letters appeared soon after the School Committee's Circular was issued:—

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE WORCESTER JOURNAL.

"SIR,—An article in the Kidderminster paper of the 26th, would fain persuade the friends to the proposed suit that they are going to spend their money in doing nothing—the arguments contained in it amount almost to jokes, and at least they are confirmatory of the points they attempt to remove.

"I will pass over the modesty of the writer being so loth in giving an earlier opinion on a question in which the whole parish is interested, and in which he ought to have been the first advocate. I know the real why and wherefore of his modesty: but I cannot coincide in the capaciousness of his belief, that the complainants 'had a full and fair opportunity of stating any and every grievance, imaginary or real, they could think of or invent.'

"It has been stated even by the Lord Bishop himself, that he could not meddle with any of the rules of the scheme which had been fulfilled, and to shew how very reckless this writer is, I refer to the Committee's list of grievances, as published in the two Worcester papers of the 24th and 25th—it will be there seen that out of the eight grievances, the Bishop could only hear them upon two, and I leave it to this writer to state, for the satisfaction of his fellow-parishioners, which of these eight were inventions.

"He argues that because there are 40,000 boys in Manchester, and their school funds are £4,408 per annum, therefore our cases are not parallel—or in other words, that what is equity for Manchester would not be equity for Kidderminster, reminding one of Beattie's words in the fable of 'The Wolf and the Shepherds'—

'Laws, as we read in ancient sages,  
Have been like cobwebs in all ages;  
Cobwebs for little flies are spread,  
And laws for little folks are made.'

"Law, therefore, according to the *Ten Towns' Messenger*, would order the proper appropriation of £4,408, but would let £795 per annum slip through its fingers! But take his own argument, and I ask the question if £4,408 will educate 40,000 boys, how many will £795 educate? Answer, 7,214!—but Kidderminster parish could not supply 7,214 boys between eight and fifteen, yet, we are abused very much by only forty being permitted to be taught, and this at an expense to their parents sufficient to send them to any other school, for be it remembered, that they get but the *commercial part* of their education for the charge of £4 per annum.

"Now, I assert once more that £795 is enough (without any boarders) to remunerate a sufficient number of Masters to teach all the boys between eight and fifteen, the sons of parishioners—the statement of Wolverley School proves this, and this School is still more beneficial to the inhabitants than I stated last week.

"He remarks upon the School being in debt, but how did this happen? Why, principally from the enormous costs incurred in procuring the recent obnoxious Scheme of 1843: with £500 income in 1843, increasing annually up to £795 in 1848, is it not too bad that this School should be £300 in

debt? but the accounts are promised to be published up to Christmas, 1848, and then we shall see the cause.

"But the most prominent argument of this writer may be easily refuted—he dwells upon the words in our deed, 'literature and sound learning,' listen, therefore, to what the Counsel for the Manchester School is stated to have said about this word, "literature," which is now sought to be interpreted as meaning only Greek and Latin. After referring at some length to the meaning of the term 'grammatica,' and quoting from Cicero and Quintillian to show that it did not refer to grammar simply, but to general literature, he stated that the introduction of the exclusive study of the dead languages was an innovation of modern times."

But now as to the Manchester masters taking boarders, they argued that they were entitled to do so, because the foundation deed allowed any boy, let him be born wheresoever he would, to be a scholar therein—not so in ours—our deed provides that the master's *undivided attention* shall be given to the sons of parishioners, therefore, how the Manchester masters' taking or not taking of boarders, can rule ours requires no trouble in the solution, besides, the Manchester masters had but twelve boarders in both their houses, and the day boys were 368 last Christmas, whilst our boarders are forty, and the day boys fifteen!

With regard to the comparison about the Dudley new scheme, the writer does not tell how the charge put upon the various boys there is disposed of, which is a most important thing, because it seems their quarterly charge is paid to the treasurer—ours to the head master; their boarders pay from two to four guineas more per annum than their day boys, whilst our day boys have always paid £4 per annum, and the boarders nothing! What does the Dudley original deed say? let that be the ground of argument, and not your modern schemes.

The complainants rest confidently on two facts. First, that the original deed was drawn up for the benefit of the parishioners and their successors; and secondly, that the recent schemes were drawn up for the benefit of the head master and his successors. I have no fear as to the result,

And remain, Sir, yours very truly,

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Kidderminster, Jan. 27, 1849.

'TO THE EDITOR OF THE WORCESTER CHRONICLE.

*Kidderminster, 27th January, 1849.*

SIR,—We perceive a letter signed "An Inhabitant" in yesterday's *Ten Towns' Messenger*.

'The writer thereof is either wilful in his misconstruction of what Mr.

Griffith said, or misinformed upon it. When the lord bishop stated that he and the feoffees had not the power to alter and depart from any one of the rules of the scheme, Mr. Griffith stated that one of them had been departed from, namely, by the offer, on the part of the feoffees, to admit the sons of Dissenters, and therefore he conceived they could also depart from other obnoxious rules in the scheme. He did not in the least complain of Dissenters' sons being *permitted* to enter, but put it to his lordship that the feoffees had equal power to depart from *any* part of the scheme as from *one* part; but his lordship stated that the feoffees had no such power in any point.

'We therefore protest against this anonymous writer's construction of what was stated, and avail ourselves gladly to bear testimony as to Mr. Griffith's fairness in this point, as upon all others. We trust that, as we were present, Mr. Griffith will hereby be exonerated from such an unfair insinuation as this anonymous writer has put forth to prejudice him in the eyes of our dissenting brethren.

'And remain,

'Yours very respectfully,

'JOSEPH WRIGHT,

'GEORGE TURTON.'

With all my engagements I consented, at the request of the Committee of the Athenæum to be its Treasurer.

This was a literary society, who in addition to possessing a circulating library, held discussions on various questions, and issued a monthly manuscript magazine. Amongst the contributors to the latter was Mr. Edward Bradley, better known to the public as "Cuthbert Bede," author of the popular work styled "Verdant Green," and other productions. He wrote several articles in the Kidderminster Athenæum Magazine, and illustrated them also with pen and ink sketches.

The contributors and readers of the *Manuscript Magazine* were eighteen in number, and many of them wrote very ably on the current subjects of the day, in prose, and on the human passions, in verse. At the end of each monthly number criticisms upon these productions were inserted by the members. This was the most interesting part of the magazine, especially as the critics did not spare each other in the least. I contributed several pieces, one of which, as below, entitled "The Castle and the

Cemetery," was written in humble imitation of Burns's poem, "The Brigs of Ayr."

The Castle and the Cemetery are both in the borough. The Castle is very old and in ruins, having been dismantled by Oliver Cromwell's troops, whilst the Cemetery is very young, having been completed and opened in 1843. They were contiguous, both being approachable from Park Lane, and could no doubt hear each other clearly, like human beings, during a wrangle; such conversations being very often carried on in loud tones.

The cause of the establishment of the Cemetery was the refusal of the clergy to bury the Rev. Richard Fry, in the parish churchyard. He had been minister of the new meeting chapel for twenty-five years, and the refusal led to his being buried in the chapel yard; but after the opening of the Cemetery, a handsome tombstone was erected to his memory, in its grave-yard, bearing the following inscription:—"In memory of the Rev. Richard Fry, for twenty-five years Minister of the New Meeting House in this town.—Born November 5th, 1759.—Died March 12th, 1842."

The Castle was no doubt a place of importance in olden times. Two members of the Cooksey family, who were knights, in the reign of Edward III., having resided therein. Their monuments are in Kidderminster parish church. In the time of Henry VIII. it became the property of the Russells, of Strensham, and finally fell into the possession, by inheritance, of Sir Francis Clare, son and heir of Sir Ralph Clare, of Caldwell. Sir Ralph Clare (contemporary of Baxter) was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester, by the Roundheads, and consequently his Castle was visited by Cromwell's troops and brought low, for the glory of God!

The only part remaining in 1849 was one tower, the roof of which was reached by forty steps. The grounds whereby the Castle was surrounded, and the neighbourhood in which the Cemetery stands, were in old days covered by a park attached



to the Castle which is still sufficiently attested by the names of the streets leading thereto, viz., Park Lane and the Park Butts.

The introductory lines to "The Castle and the Cemetery" were as follows :—

#### THE INTRODUCTION.

Old grandames frown on youthful wishes,  
 Old gourmands sneer at modern dishes,  
 Old coachmen storm at railway steam  
 And vow nought can surpass a team ;  
 Old politicians hate free trade—  
 Swear England was for England made,  
 And that since these new-fangled tropes  
 Were introduced, all further hopes  
 Of England's glory is no more  
 Substantial, than the whirlwind's roar,  
 Which causes wonder whilst 'tis brewing,  
 And ends in tumult, wreck, and ruin !  
 And, *vice versa*, youthful hearts  
 Look back on past times as old marts,  
 Where antique objects catch the sight,  
 Exciting wonder, not delight :  
 Things bearable, but nothing more,  
 Gazed at and passed by as a bore :  
 Whether the old or young are right,  
 Let others judge—I merely write.

October's sad decaying hand  
 Had spread o'er mountain, lake, and land ;  
 The trees had lost their gorgeous coats—  
 The birds forgot their happy notes—  
 The myriad insect tribes were fled  
 To warmer climes, or with the dead.  
 And nought remained to cheer the sight,  
 Or cause the human heart delight.

Hark on the wind, in weary tone,  
 Yon ancient Castle doth bemoan  
 Its sad, neglected, friendless state,  
 Its youthful joys, its aged fate.

## THE DIALOGUE.

## THE CASTLE.

O, hapless fate, to be forgot  
By all around ! why was I not  
In youth permitted to decay ?  
Then should I ne'er this heavy day  
Have felt, nor in my age be left,  
Of friendly joys and hopes bereft.  
Here year by year I stand and rot,  
By thoughtless mortals still forgot,  
Who hasten new-born joys to see,  
Which have nor age nor pedigree ;  
Like yon young upstart Cemetery  
Of modern times a true vagary.

## THE CEMETERY.

Hold, hold, the Cemetery cried,  
I will not, Sage, be thus belied ;  
If I am young, that was the case  
With you, before you wash'd your face.  
In your rude times this happy land  
Was stained with blood by human hand,  
The prize to greatest villains given,  
The deepest guilt, too, quickly shriven :  
Black sins forgiven every hour,  
If gold was in th' offender's power :  
But now the even-balanced scale  
Makes both the rich and poor to quail,  
Be they in sin soe'er expert,  
Or right's decided paths desert.

## THE CASTLE.

Your words betray your silly youth—  
Shameless, you dare pervert the truth,  
And stab hap-hazard at both men  
And times far, far, beyond your ken ;  
Those were the times when men indeed  
Met with reward which was their meed—  
Not like your modern clap-trap rules,  
Which give the garter to born fools,

Whose smooth cemented outsides hide,  
Like you, the filth that lives inside,  
And whilst the world admires their gloss,  
Finds in the end it is but dross.

## THE CEMETERY.

How right your pride of age reveals  
The envy that your bosom feels ?  
True! I am young and handsome too,  
And from this eminence can view,  
As daily I in joy look down  
Upon the neighbouring busy town,  
Its mannfactories, churches, streets,  
Its healthy new suburban seats,  
Where tradesmen rich reside at ease,  
And breathe sweet nature's vernal breeze ;  
Men who with well-earned wealth are blest,  
Who mix their life with toil and rest,  
Whilst you, sunk in that hole, scarce seen,  
Are tortured with self-pride and spleen ;  
Inhaling noxious vapours, bred  
In Caldwell's pool's empoison'd bed

## THE CASTLE.

Oh, son of pride, old Satan's spawn—  
Into what self-conceit you're drawn !  
Those several objects you descry,  
For years and ages now gone by,  
Have lived with me a happy life,  
Devoid of enmity or strife ;  
The church, that bears St. Mary's name,  
Know's well my ancient days of fame ;  
Ere gen'rous Cooksey\* reared my walls,  
And noble Russell† trod my halls,

---

\* "In the 7th of Henry VI., as by the Exchequer record appears, Hugo de Cooksey, the Lord of Abergavenny, and Prior of Maiden Bradley, held lands in Kidderminster. By these accounts it seems the Lords Beauchamp and Abergavenny derived their title to the Manor of Kidderminster from the Burnell's, heirs to Biset."—NASH.

† "In the time of Henry VIII the lands of Caldwell became the property of the Russells, of Strensham."—IBID.

Here Waller\* sang heroic deeds,  
And Baxter loitered through my meads,  
Here Shenstone sent his measures sweet,  
Adown the Stour my hopes to greet ;  
Those were the days of England's joy—  
The land had peace without alloy—  
The rich were simple, happy, blest,  
The poor were still the rich man's guest ;  
Nor ceased those days, till faction's brood,  
Led by some heads with craft endued,  
Their king, their country, prostrate laid,  
And gloried in their bloody trade ;  
Then when Sir Ralph de-Clare, brave knight,  
Withstood his sovereign's foes in fight ;  
Cromwell my ancient walls attacked,  
And all my long-prized treasures sacked.  
Then followed in war's ruthless train,  
The never-failing deepened stain  
Of hopeless poverty and fear,  
That makes us peaceful times revere ;  
Ere then fair beauty ranged my bowers,  
And true-born valour kept my towers ;  
The merry guests were welcome all,  
Both hawk and hound came at their call,  
And groaning targets felt the blow  
That came from well-tried English bow :  
Then Stour's pellucid stream with fish  
Was sacred for the poor man's dish,  
And peace and plenty reign'd around,  
Sure guardians of this happy ground.  
Alas ! alas ! the scene is changed,  
Nature's old habits are deranged—  
The stunted grass the earth scarce clothes,

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\* Waller, the poet, lived in a brick mansion, near Kidderminster Parish Church ; he owned half the Manor of Kidderminster, which he sold in 1635 to raise funds to bribe the Puritans, and mollify their intention of depriving him of his life.—Baxter's favourite walk was down to Caldwell Castle and back ; and the allusion to Shenstone is caused from the river Stour, which passes Caldwell Castle, having its source in the Leasowes, the place of the poet's residence, near Halesowen.

Each fish the poisoned Stour loathes ;  
The air is burthened with thick smoke,  
Which from mine eyes the town doth cloak,  
And nature seems to shun the place,  
As though it caused her sad disgrace.  
Peace to your tongue, no more I'll hear !  
Age, fame, and chivalry revere,  
Since all your modern systems share  
The love of lucre and its care.

At Easter, this year (1849), I was elected parish churchwarden,—this was rather against my will, as I was the principal promoter of the chancery suit, which was about being instituted against the feoffees of the Grammar School. But I was not allowed to be elected without a contest, as the clerical party had an antipathy for me, because of this proposed suit ; and they put forward my landlord in opposition. He had been churchwarden for several years, and was universally respected, but withdrew from the contest at twelve o'clock on the polling day, as I had then polled about three votes to one.

This was the first public contest in which I was personally interested, and a pretty considerable amount of excitement was stirred up. The most singular thing brought about thereby, was, that the female ratepayers (old maids) all voted against me : but having always found that women were ardent supporters of the clergy, I did not feel much surprised at their zeal on this occasion. My opponent, Mr. Burrows, and myself, kept up our friendship in spite of this contest, and he very handsomely afforded me every information that I required. It was a very heavy office, as there were five places of worship in the parish belonging to the established church. Archdeacon Hone came during my wardenship to examine the state of three of these churches and chapels, and I had to accompany him. As we drove to Wribbenhall Chapel, snow was falling, and he jocularly remarked that he did not like "*steeple-chasing*" in such weather.

Finding the two oldest of the church-yards in a very bad state, I asked permission of the Board of Guardians for the

services of some of the male-paupers to clean the walks, and open some new ones, in which I succeeded.

There were many charities connected with my office, and a large offertory to distribute, to say nothing of the trouble of writing out the rate books, and collecting the rates. There was also a visitation held at Bromsgrove, which I had to attend, and at which I refused to pay the visitation fees, as I considered that money drawn from the pockets of the parishioners ought not to be paid to a number of hungry officials, who did nothing for it in return.

I took some trouble to find out what these fees were, and as to what work was done for them; but all the answer I got from the Proctor, the Apparitor, and the Vicar, was, that they always had been paid. After the visitation I wrote letters to the three county papers, justifying my refusal, to which no reply was vouchsafed.

In short I did my duty in every way as Parish-warden, and although the clergy were cold in their demeanour towards me, I re-established the old custom of having a churchwardens dinner, which was held at the Lion Hotel, with great *éclat*. I invited all the clergy, and my churchwarden opponent (Mr. John Burrows) to the dinner, as well as my fellow-parishioners, without regard to sect or party. This I found softened down the asperity existing in the minds of those who think the clergy to be undeserving of censure in anything they do, whether it be right or wrong.

All this travelling, collecting, account keeping, and charity distributing, were done for nothing, yet on the very first day after I was out of office, the old men and women, who used to touch hats and curtsy to me in the streets, suddenly lost their eyesight, so far as I was concerned; the blessings of which they transferred to my successor, Mr. Woodhouse. This was very ungrateful on their parts, but I felt that as I could give them no more money, clothes, coal, and bread, I was deserted by them solely on that account, and mercilessly cast into outward darkness.

On the 2nd of April in this year (1849), I received a notice of which the following is a copy:—

"H.—NOTICE TO THE GUARDIANS ELECTED.

"Kidderminster Union.—Borough of Kidderminster.

"SIR,—I do hereby give you notice, and declare, that you have been duly elected a Guardian of the Poor for the Borough of Kidderminster, in the Kidderminster Union, and that the next Meeting of the Board of Guardians of the said Union will be held at the Board Room, Church Street, Kidderminster, to-morrow, Tuesday, at the hour of eleven in the forenoon.

"Signed this 2nd day of April, 1849,

"H. SAUNDERS,

"*Clerk to the Guardians of the Poor of the Kidderminster Union.*"

"To Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITH, of Mill Street."

I found that the office of a guardian was much more agreeable than that of churchwarden. It entailed attendance weekly for a few hours only, without any responsibility as to collecting rates, or keeping accounts, or of being dunned at my residence. It is true that when the cholera occurred, a committee selected from the Board of which I happened to be one, had a very unpleasant duty to perform, viz., to visit the worst parts of the borough, and order a thorough purification of the houses and appurtenances, where we found it was required. Until I went round with the other members of this committee I had no conception of the filth in which we found hundreds of the people wallowing; it was simply incredible; and notwithstanding instant and liberal applications of whitewash and deoderisers, and a plentiful washing with water by the aid of the town fire-engine, the fearful Asiatic cholera took deep root, and carried off numbers of victims to their last homes.

The committee were requested particularly to inspect the lodging-houses, and to warn the keepers not to admit people arriving from infected districts. This was a very difficult matter, as there was no certainty of the truth being told by the tramps.

For my own satisfaction I used to visit some of these lodging houses in the evenings. I dressed on all these occasions in disguise, and got the tenants of these resorts of the tramps to let me appear amongst them as though I was one of themselves.

Many strange conversations did I hear during these visits, my favourite place of resort being up a particular court.

This court was extensive, containing about twenty houses or rather dens, built one story high, and ornamented with broken windows and unpainted doors. In the middle of the court all the filth of these houses lay scattered about, over which a hungry-looking iron pump stood sentinel. Not that the pump was ever brought into opposition with the filth, or its waters made use of to cleanse it away, but it looked in indignation on all around and seemed to sneer, with well-merited contempt, at the lazy and filthy population by which it was surrounded.

The houses were inhabited thickly by night, but not much in the day. The senior occupants, with few exceptions, went to work in the town factories. The children were left in most cases to run and tumble about, disguised in ragged and out-grown clothes and adult shoes as they best could. Some were fighting, some were playing, whilst others were squatting on the door sills, indifferent to all that was passing around.

On one occasion, whilst I was in one of the houses, a clergyman visited it for the purpose of seeing an old woman who was in a very serious state of sickness; he was accompanied by a vagrant boy, who had received some act of kindness at the hands of the old woman in past days, and after they went up stairs, to gain the room where the old woman lay, the following conversation took place between the tramps:—

"I wonder," said one of the dog-carters, who had hair enough on his head to represent one of the largest users of oil, "I wonder what that boy who has gone up stairs thinks of a clergyman?"

"What he thinks," exclaimed a match dealer, "why he thinks like millions, who ought to know better, that there is great virtue in a black coat and white neckcloth; but if he knew what I know he would despise the lot." Well and what do you know, pray," said a grey whiskered vendor of toasting forks. "What do I know," replied the other, "why I'll tell you; when I was about nine years of age there was a free school in our



parish, and I had been in it about one year when the school-master died, and it being a country place with no other school near us for several miles, our fathers and mothers made sure we should have another master, but the rector who was the head trustee, and indeed the only one then, as the others were all dead and no others elected, shut the school up, let the land and pocketed the rents; so that we could get no learning; and through that most of the labourers sons turned out middling, and I amongst the rest." "Bad, very bad," said the man of forks whilst he lit his pipe, "but was there no one in the parish big enough to have a set to at the rector about it." "No, no," replied the match dealer, "he was the heir of the founder of the school, and he was always of opinion that poor people were best without learning; there was only a few rich farmers scattered here and there throughout the parish, who had more veneration for the rector's will than the welfare of the children of the labourers who worked daily for them." "Well," said an old blind woman, who raised a heavy revenue by playing on a violin through the streets, "I don't see much gain in larning, as I never had none, nor never wanted none, seein as I could never see, and have done as well as any on you, and know how to behave myself as well as many of my betters, I fancy." Ah! but," said the match maker, "suppose we were all blind, what would the world come to then?—I guess people couldn't see you in the streets and put money in your greasy begging box." "Never mind my greasy box," said the old woman, "it's quite as useful to me as your larning is to you?" "But," said the match maker, "isn't larning to the mind what eye-sight is to the body, dosen't it enable us to discern light from darkness, good from bad; an ignorant untaught man has but half sight, he cannot read even what he sees over shop doors, in shop windows, or on the public walls."

"Well I don't know that that makes much difference," said a fourth listener, an itinerant worm doctor, "you see that I can sell these worm powders for the good of the poor, and I never learned any thing but a little Greek and Latin at a foundation

school. They would not teach commercial studies, so that this knowledge serves my purpose by spouting a little learned lingo in market places, and if the poor people knew how to read I should lose their custom. As I never learnt any thing but the classics, I think they can do as well without an English education as myself, besides I have heard of many educated men being hung and transported." "Yes, and you may have heard," said the match maker, "of people with eyes in their heads walking deliberately into a river, or jumping off London bridge, or cutting their throats, but they are but few, and if men do wrong it is not learning that makes them do so, but it's learning that keeps the greater number honest and industrious." "Why," said the blind woman, "you're a contradicting of yourself; look at the parson you was talking on, he larned every thing, and I reckon he found it so bad as he didn't like no others to have it."

There was a general roar at the match-maker's expense, and as he found he was in the minority he turned towards the fire and puffed away at his pipe in great indignation. After a little silence an old man who sat near the half-open door turned round and coughed aloud: they all turned to look at him: he was a native of Switzerland, but left his country on the death of his wife and only son, to travel the world in despair. He looked wistfully at his present companions, as much as to say will you listen to me? and turned to look out at the door again: the match-maker saw he was inclined to speak, and addressed him; "now, Stranger, as you are a foreigner and must have travelled far and wide, will you give us your opinion about education?"

"I cannot give you an opinion," said the Swiss, "but if you like I will give you the history of a young man I knew well, and that will shew you not only what we think of it abroad but what we do."

They all exclaimed with one voice "let's have it," and inviting the old man to sit near the fire, they charged their several pipes and drew round.

"The name of the man I alluded to," said the Swiss, "was Jonas Jordan, the son of a brazier at Altenheim. The father

falling into bad circumstances turned hawker, and took his son Jonas with him. The boy wanted to beg on their journeys, but the father forbade him, and told him that

Begged bread doth to mischief lead,  
Bread stolen brings to the gallows,  
But labour helps in time of need,  
For labour heaven hallows."

"But," said the boy, "some are rich and yet do not work, that is not fair;" the father replied, "their parents left them riches, and if all were equally rich all would be equally poor; we are all equally poor at death, and labour-wealth is the sweetest."

"He taught his boy in the spring to gather sloes, elder-berries, and rose leaves, for ointments; in the summer strawberries, bilberries, and raspberries for jams; and in the winter to collect wool, bones, rags, rushes, feathers, bristles, roots, and herbs. When they had a quantity he sold them to wholesale dealers. Some called him a miser, some a vagrant, but he pursued his course and put their joint savings in a bank week by week.

"He at last put his son apprentice to an engraver, and soon after that, being taken ill, he sent for him to his bed-side and gave him his blessing and a small sealed box, telling him not to open it until after his apprenticeship, and not then if he could do without it.

"Jonas's master was a drinker, his mistress a scold, and the men in the workshop ill-natured. His spare hours he spent with his master's daughter, except when he visited a neighbour who taught him reading, writing, and arithmetic, with whom, at the end of his apprenticeship, he deposited the box his father had given to him, and went out on his travels as a journeyman to improve his knowledge of engraving.

"He returned in six years, and became a member of the guild of his trade by the usual means, namely, that of producing a superior piece of workmanship. Soon after this he married his master's daughter, and on sending the Prince's coat of arms engraved on a gilt shield, as a token of loyalty to the Prince, he was appointed Master Girdler to the Prince's Court.

"He was very frugal, and was often sneered at as a niggard, but he said to himself 'throwing words is not so bad as throwing stones, and calumny must have vent on some one.'

"He had a son named Velt, who became very clever at learning. In the 'head school' he was in the head class. He was apprenticed to his father for four years, and in all his spare hours attended school as before. Here he generally studied the chemistry of metals, earths, acids, and salts, which was of great service to him in his trade.

"His father was employed by the government, and his son's knowledge was very beneficial to him in completing his work. He said his son had learnt useful things, not the dead languages, nor the useless histories of the walls and fortifications of ancient nations, just as though he was to live backwards. He rejoiced that he had acquired a knowledge of the practical arts and sciences in the schools he had attended.

"When Velt was twenty years old he travelled for improvement. Before he set off his father said to him, 'learn the why and wherefore of everything, study modern facts, avoid ancient novelties, shun public-houses, ask much, and be ignorant that you may learn.'

"He spent five years travelling and working in Nurenberg, Munich, London, and Paris, and in the latter his employer finding him industrious and faithful, made him his partner.

"In the course of time he became opulent, and then returned to his native place, but not to be idle. He established the first foundry there, and an industrial school for the training of artisans. This was very successful, yet the *inactive* said it was the pride of modern ideas, whilst the *canters* said it was the worship of learning, and the forerunner of the downfall of religion. These two classes never did love a clear understanding, a home-spun talent, nor the conjoint industry of the brain and the fingers."

"Well," said the worm-doctor on the conclusion of the narration, "what has this tale to do with us?"

"Everything," said the Swiss; "if you had been trained like Velt you would have been a useful member of society instead of

a vendor of semi-poisons; if you, (addressing the match-maker) had been so taught, you would very likely have been a wholesale maker of lucifer matches instead of eking out a miserable, half-starved life by hawking. Had you," said he to the fork-maker, "been so educated, you would have been a large wire-work manufacturer; and if you will narrowly look at the state of English society, you will find that it is from the very imperfect education of the people that nine-tenths of the vagrancy, the crime, the pauperism, and the dissoluteness, which curses your otherwise happy land, arises. And more than that, the very severe competition amongst small traders, who are generally an uneducated class, and the universal system of trade speculation and worship of money arise from the same causes."

"I believe," said the worm-doctor, "you are correct, in all you have said, but as to speculation you must not say it belongs to the ignorant alone; look at the recent exposure of the bishops' over-plus incomes; the deans' and chapters' robbery of their school-boys, and of all the under-officials, from the minor canon down to the sexton; and the pluralities, and sales of livings. Look, too, at the government offices, the fees of lawyers, the high charges of the medical profession, the avariciousness of the heads of Colleges and Halls, and the fact of the large revenues belonging to many free grammar schools being handed over to clerical occupiers, instead of being devoted to the enlarged benefit of the sons of the parishioners. You must not, I say, assert that speculation belongs to the middle and working classes alone, and I believe that had we been better educated, and had the Press been free, these enormities would never have been committed, or if they had, they would have been nipped in the bud and cured."

"When your government encourages education on a large scale," said the Swiss, "and when boys and girls are kept to school until they reach fourteen years of age, and are taught what is practically useful, you will find that when they grow up you will have quite an improved age and generation." There was no reply to this; the hour was late, and the itinerant traders and tramps of the lodging-house went to their beds.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE.

This story as told by the Swiss tramp is a condensation to some extent of a production by Zechokke, called "Labour stands on golden feet," wherein is shown, in narrative, the excellency of the Swiss system of education.

The Report too, of Mr. Matthew Arnold, a Government Education Assistant Commissioner, on the state of secondary education in Switzerland, and other continental countries (Vol. 6, Schools Inquiry Commission, published in 1868, and presented to both houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty,) is well worth perusing; the price of this vol. is only 2s. 9d. It contains 283 pages, devoted to the continental schools alone; as also a Report on the state of education in Scotland, by Mr. D. R. Fearon, embracing 234 pages. It would be very beneficial in all respects if the Government would order an issue of these Reports to be published in 1d. numbers weekly.

The following instance, taken from Mr. Arnold's Report, shows how important the education of the children is looked upon by Swiss parents:—"Winterthur is, I think, for its school establishments the most remarkable place in Europe. It is the second town for importance in Canton Zurich, and thrives by its manufacture of muslins; but it has not more than 8,000 inhabitants. The schools of this small place recall the municipal palaces of Flanders and Italy. They are the objects of first importance in the town, and would be admirable anywhere; besides the elementary schools there is a middle school, an industrial school, and a gymnasium, all built within the last 25 years and which have cost the town not less than £100,000. I found about 80 scholars in the gymnasium, two-thirds of them Winterthur boys; the rest come from a distance, and board under regulations similar to those in Prussia, with the masters or with families in the town. I heard a lesson in Livy in the class which with us would have been the fifth form; the performance was quite as good as that which I remember in the fifth form of Winchester or Rugby. In the Industrial School I found about 200 scholars; in the upper division of this there is the same grouping of scholars for different lines which obtains at Zurich. The teaching is said by competent judges to be particularly well organized in these higher real schools of Switzerland. The Winterthur higher schools, though not cantonal schools, have, and deservedly, an exceptional position; they are under the inspection of a cantonal commission, and in immediate relation with the Education Council. These Winterthur burghers seek competent advice with as much zeal as in England a batch of local people show in resisting it. Nor is it to get money that they have a recourse

to the State; the grant from the state to these Winterthur establishments is £80 a year, and the town of Winterthur itself spends £3,200 a year on them. This sum is supplied from the communal property, and it is to be observed that generally in a Swiss parish it is the commune that is the great proprietor, as in England it is the squire. The sons of Winterthur burghers have free schooling; others pay much the same rates as at Zurich. As at Zurich, too, half of the school fees is divided among the teachers; the other half goes to the school-chest.

The teachers in Canton Zurich form a sort of guild, and exercise considerable influence. In the higher schools they form *Convente* and *Specialconvente*, the *Convente* being for each school, the *Specialconvente* for each division, upper or lower, of each school. They are in fact masters' meetings, as at Rugby we used to call them; but in Switzerland they have a legal status and regularly report to the Commissions of Superintendence. They are said to be of great service in keeping the school work properly graduated and in maintaining uniformity of standard. New rules they can only make for points which the school law and the regulations of the Education Council have not already settled, but changes cannot be introduced without their opinion being taken upon them. In the same way, the teachers of the primary and secondary schools of each district, form a school chapter, which meets four times a year, forms sections for the discussion of any special matters in which schools and teachers are interested, reports to the Education Council, and has a right to be heard before any change in the work-plan or in regulations of the popular schools are adopted. These chapters, again, unite with the whole body of teachers of the higher schools of the canton to form a School Synod, having for its business the promotion of education in the canton, and to convey the wishes and proposals of the teaching body to the authorities. This Synod meets once a year, its business and method of proceeding being always prepared beforehand by a Pro-Synod."



## CHAPTER XVI.

" 'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill  
Appear in writing, or in *judging* ill :  
But of the two, less dang'rous is th' offence,  
To tire our patience, than *mislead* our sense."—POPE.

As a set off to the troubles entailed upon me by being elected churchwarden and guardian, there were many new and gratifying associations springing up with persons in the neighbourhood, to whom, before the school question arose, I was personally unknown.

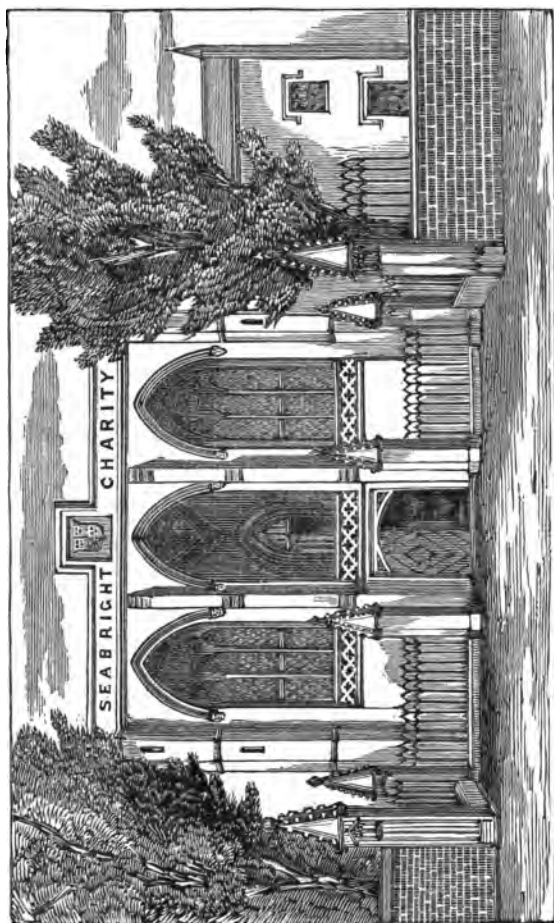
One of the most pleasant instances of this was when I was invited to the Wolverley flower show and dinner, at which I met with many old, and became acquainted with many new friends. The dinner was held at the Queen's Head, Mr. Saunders, the clerk to our Board of Guardians being chairman.

On this occasion the Kidderminster school reformation was the chief theme of conversation, and the great contrast between that and the Free Schools at Wolverley was much descanted upon. In the latter not a penny was charged for education nor for books, slates, or anything else, in either boys, girls, or infants' schools, and the masters were not allowed to take any boarders.

As the state of these schools at that date is shown in my "History of the Free Schools of Worcestershire" I need not dwell upon it, but as that volume does not contain a copy of the Founder's Deed, I think it well to say here that I shall insert it in the appendix at the end of this Work.

It will be seen therein how singularly wise and foreseeing the Founder was, in ordering that the vicar of the parish should "in no wise" be the school-master, and that should the school-master ever become vicar, that he should thereupon be discharged from





WOLVERLEY FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

the school-mastership, by the school feoffees. How beneficial to the people of the United Kingdom would it have been, had all free school founders been equally blessed with such foresight.

During the proceedings connected with the suit, I had to go to London occasionally to see the chancery lawyers. Their offices were in King's Bench Walk, and whenever I visited it I found a little woman, shabbily dressed, pacing the footpath to and fro, and lamenting, in disjointed sentences, how she had lost her property by the chicanery of the proceedings carried on in the Court of Chancery.

King's Bench Walk is a very respectable looking row of barrister's and law agents' offices in the temple. There is a grand pile of new offices opposite the old row, at which the latter looks very indignantly. The lintels and side-posts are sprinkled with names, but not a word denotes the occupations of the gentlemen who are thereupon recorded.

At eight o'clock every morning, dirty old women traverse the square to dust and sweep the offices. At nine the postmen follow with more letters in their hands and arms than they can well control. At ten the clerks and junior partners pour down in streams; and from ten to twelve, the well-trained elder partners, and the brethren of the gown and the wig follow, with very sedate steps, and enormously high and stiff cravats.

One morning, soon after the bishop's interview with the Kidderminster school committee, a letter arrived at King's Bench Walk, No. 11, first floor, ordering an information to be filed, in the names of eight tradesmen, against the visitor, the feoffees, and the two masters of the said grammar school. This was pleasant news to first floor No. 11—the junior clerks were pleased,—the acting chancery clerk was pleased,—the partners were delighted! "Grammar schools afford good meals lately," said lawyer V. to clerk B. "Yes," said B. to V., "they are abominable perversions, and ought to be cured." "Just so," said B. to V., "and we must secure the best pleaders. I should like to employ our old friend, in this cause, who won a similar one last term, but as we could not agree about the settle-

ment of that, of course the thing can't be done." "Of course not," said B. to V.

The lawyers' examination now began; the original charter, succeeding feoffments, indentures of lease and re-lease, petitions, orders and schemes, were well rummaged up, and deposited in the Court of Record, Chancery Lane, for the perusal of the relators attorneys and their agents. They were all perused at the *small cost* of seven shillings an hour, by the relators-solicitors-agents-clerk's clerk. This charge was made for sitting there to make extracts, and when the clerk's clerk went into Holborn, to get a veal cutlet and vegetables for dinner, he had to pay twopence to the doorkeeper, for merely going out. This was the beginning of the costs, and, of course a mere trifle, amongst eight relators. Who gets this seven shillings an hour it is difficult to say; but it is supposed to form part of the mendicant fee system, which even railway companies repudiate with scorn.

The suit went on; and the feoffees had to put in their answer, but they were very independent about the matter, as they knew the costs would not, in any case, fall upon themselves, although their neglect of the interest of the inhabitants had been the cause of all the trouble and expense.

The suit went on; and the head master had to put in his answer, and an amended answer, to the amended information; and the clerk to the feoffees had a long bill in his ledger against the school,—so long that he had to borrow two hundred pounds towards the costs, to remit to his London agents.

During these preliminary proceedings in Chancery, my friend, Mr. John Best, a barrister of the Worcester circuit, and son of one of the school feoffees, tendered me his services in any way that he could render help on behalf of the inhabitants' sons. This I readily availed myself of, and I shall never forget the sympathy and assistance he rendered to our cause, and that without any remuneration. Acting upon his advice, I made it my business when in London, to call upon Mr. Benbow, M.P., for Dudley, to gather his views, and if possible to gain his sympathy. This was of importance, as he had been one of the Trustees of the

Dudley Estates, and was still acting for Lord Ward, who succeeded to the estates of his uncle, the Earl of Dudley. He understood the whole of the circumstances of the suit, and knew the neighbourhood well, his father having resided within five miles of Kidderminster for a long period.

I was at his house (according to appointment) by six o'clock in the morning, his breakfast hour, and after a long conversation, I walked with him to his office, in Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn. Here he assured me that he would do everything in his power on behalf of the Kidderminster people.

The gratuitous exertions made use of by Mr. John Best on our behalf, induced me to propose to him, that he should stand as a candidate at the forthcoming election in September, (1849). To this he did not give an immediate assent, stating, that as he was but young at the Bar, he had better decline entering into a parliamentary contest. I told him that the sympathy created in the minds of the voters, from his generous conduct as to the school suit, would insure his success, and he then requested me to see his father (Mr. William Best, of Blakebrook House), and also his father-in-law, Mr. William Trow (of Ismere House), upon the question. This I did, but found them both averse thereto. Upon consulting my friend, Mr. James Tudor, and explaining to him what I had done, we resolved to call a committee of neighbours together, and if they consented, to make the preliminary arrangements for the contest, whether Mr. Best consented or not.

This we found to be agreeable to all our friends, especially as Mr. Best's father had always taken our part at the School Feoffees' Meetings.

The question of the school invested this election with a very peculiar interest; in fact there were such novel opposing elements brought into action, that the management of the contest on our side required the greatest care and judgment, especially when we found that a very formidable candidate appeared in the field.

This was no less a person than Mr. Thomas Gisborne, of

Yoxall Lodge, near Burton-on-Trent, who had, formerly, been one of the members for Nottingham.

Here were we, on Mr. Best's side, supported, so far as politics went, by our opponents in the school suit, simply because Mr. Gisborne on the other side was a thoroughly uncompromising radical; and here was our candidate, because he was believed to be a Tory from his family connexions, in everything else but the school question, opposed by numbers of the voters who had supported the School Reform Committee.

The question was often asked "Why did we not support Mr. Gisborne, who was a reformer in every sense?" My reply was "That Mr. Best in so disinterestedly supporting our views as to the school restitution, long before any election was in view, deserved some mark of our regard, and that as he was an untried young man, it was probable he would make as good a radical as Mr. Gisborne; besides which we should prefer a townsman to represent us, and that as we found there was a bitter opposition to Mr. Best's being elected on the part of a certain nobleman, who had become possessed of the school estate at Greenhill, and that as we believed also that this opposition had sprung from a foolish feeling of irritation, because that certain loud declamations had been made use of in the streets, against our will and without our wish, as to the unfairness of the school and farm exchange, when the said nobleman visited the town, we were resolved to support Mr. Best.

It was very singular to find whilst the school committee was acting against the school feoffees, that the senior feoffee, Mr. William Boycot, senior, proposed Mr. Best on the day of nomination.

It was also very singular to find, that a body of some thirty of the ultra-supporters of the school authorities, held off until they saw Mr. Best's election was in danger, and then came forward and voted to secure it. But this was not because they loved Mr. Best the more, but that they loved Mr. Gisborne the less. It was a very bitter and hard task indeed for them to vote for the candidate put forward by the school reformers, but

what between the fear of the radical candidate winning, and the hope of moderating our endeavours to restore the school to its old uses, they came forward at a late hour and voted on our side.

My friend, Mr. Tudor, and myself had cast up the canvassing book, after the midnight hour preceding the noon-day nomination; we found 215 votes for Best and 198 for Gisborne, whilst the result was two more for each candidate.

Never was there such sincere rejoicing in Kidderminster as when the poll was declared in favour of Mr. John Best. A procession of his supporters and the committee was formed in the evening to go round the borough, headed by the young member. His first child was brought out from his father's house when the procession arrived there, and I shall never forget the feeling I experienced when the bantling was handed up to the father by the grandfather to have a kiss; and such a shout of real joy I never heard from a crowd before nor since.

Having done business with most of the Kinlet farmers ever since I commenced trading on my own account, I was in the habit of attending the annual oyster supper, which was held at the Eagle and Serpent Inn, there, every November. This place was about eight miles from Kidderminster, and I used to start soon after dinner time, and go round amongst the farmers for orders, before sitting down at the Eagle and Serpent. It was in this year (1849) that I first met with Mr. Thomas Jordin, a resident of the parish of Highley, who lived on a small farm of his own. He had some strange recollections or rather hallucinations of by-gone days, when he used to follow the fox hounds belonging to the "Old Squire of Kinlet Hall."

Amongst these was a singular narrative as to the "Old Squire," long after his death and burial, returning from his grave, and leading the hunt on a memorable occasion. The words "leading the hunt" bear a curious signification in this case, as Mr. Jordin avers most solemnly, that there was no fox to be found on that day, and that the old squire on his favourite horse kept full before the hounds, and answered the purpose of the fox.

To make such a statement seems the strangest part of the



KINLET HALL, SHROPSHIRE.

matter, but there are many persons in that district who have heard Mr. Jordin state it over and over again, and I have myself heard him do so, at the Swan Inn dinner table in Bridgenorth, more than once.

On one of these occasions I asked Mr. Jordin if he would object to the narration being put into verse, to which he said "not in the least." I accordingly did so, and I read it to him and the company at the Swan Inn, on the first day that he happened to come to market, as follows :—

#### THE SQUIRE OF KINLET HALL.

In days gone by, at Kinlet Hall,  
The Squire kept up a famous pack,  
The broadest ditch, the highest wall,  
Both horse and dog leaped in a crack ;  
The Squire was first in every leap,  
The Squire was first in at the death,  
O'er clay-soil fields, up every steep,  
His horse and he kept leg and breath ;  
The Field his slightest wish obeyed,  
They followed madly in his rear :  
Nor stream nor hill their daring stayed,  
Alike devoid of toil or fear.

One day when friends with cheers and smiles  
Followed this famous Squire once more,  
The fox—an old one—miles and miles  
Led them o'er hills ne'er crossed before ;  
Jack Parton shouted to the dogs,  
The Squire he raved, and cursed, and swore,  
And vowed that if this fox was killed,  
When he could ride and hunt no more  
He'd come from out his grave and be  
The fox for these same hounds to run,—  
And then he laughed and said, " You'll see,  
I'll be your fox some day for fun."  
'Tis said that night the thunder pealed,  
The sky put on its gloomiest face,  
The trees beneath the lightning reeled,  
The rain in torrents fell apace ;



The squire that night to all was kind,  
He pledged his friends right merrily :  
But still his words disturbed his mind,  
And made the hours drag wearily.

A few more years, the old Squire died,  
Deplored by both the rich and poor :  
The rich looked up to him with pride,  
On him depended many a boor ;  
No more the hills and valleys rung  
With his clear voice as on he led  
The eager pack, no more he sung—  
"Stay not your course till Reynard's dead."

Not many years had o'er his tomb  
Passed swiftly by, when horse and hound  
Once more dispelled the old whip's gloom,  
Parton, who to the Squire was bound ;  
The field was full, the morn was bright,  
The sun in glory shone o'er all :  
The dogs came yelping with delight  
At Parton's well-known hearty call.

At Billingsley they met that day,  
Near to the Old Cape of Good Hope,—  
When suddenly the sky turned gray,  
The winds in anger seem'd to cope.—  
But wind or weather, wet or dry,  
The true-born sportsman never fears :  
He only dreams of "whoop! full cry,"  
Music most dear to sportman's ears.  
Following Jack Parton—trusty whip—  
Old Furnaces they soon had pass'd,  
Through Squire Crump's covers quickly slip,  
When men, dogs, horses, stood aghast!

There the old Squire's horse went ahead,  
The old Squire seated as of yore,  
Booted and spurred, the hunt he led  
Before the hounds with awful roar,  
Nor turned to look behind, but on  
Through the old Desert's cover dashed :  
Then the High Green as quickly won,  
Then back to Billingsley returned ;

Crossed and re-crossed the turbid brook,  
The highest, broadest, ditches spurned :  
Then through the Bush Wood Coppice took,  
Then through the Dingle on they splashed,  
And westward crossed to Stottesdon,  
Long ere the set of evening sun.

Whilst round the Squire a halo burned,  
Nor dog, nor whip, could touch his heels,  
Nor ever he his face once turned,  
(Save when bold Jordin near him came,  
And then a monkey's face reveals,  
Surrounded by a lurid flame,)  
But on he dashed as if the hounds  
Of death had passed their native bounds  
To chase him to Satanic grounds !

Thus six long hours the good old pack  
Held on their way with panting sides,  
Obedient to the whip of Jack—  
Old Parton—who so fearless rides.  
But, strange to say, the Squire's old gray  
Upon the ground ne'er put a hoof,  
But seemed to fly like bird along ;  
Whilst the old Squire laughed at the throng  
That followed him that wondrous day,  
And cried, "Come on ! why keep aloof ?  
Are ye afraid to follow me ?  
I told you I your fox should be."

At last the wood he gained and there  
Nor hound, nor horse would follow on ;  
Nor ever since that day long gone  
Has hound or horse been found to dare  
To enter that detested wood :  
For there no doubt a horrid brood  
Of spirits cursed rise from each den,  
To meet and laugh o'er evil deeds,  
And there recount past sins again,  
Such as mere lust and lucre breeds.

Oh ! happy they who shun such fate,  
Who envy not the rich estate,

Of those who like the daring Squire  
Meet with a punishment so dire,  
As to be hunted by the pack,  
Of their past sins, should they come back.

## M O R A L .

Now all you hunters, Wheat-land, Rye-land,  
Whether you hunt on low, or high-land,  
Take care and swear not in your passion,  
Nor in the chase feel any ire,  
Or else you'll hunt in some such fashion—  
Before the hounds—like this old Squire !

This chapter brings me to the end of the first half of the forty years of my career, (*i.e.* from 1830 to 1850) in which I have endeavoured to delineate my connexion with "Going to Markets and Grammar Schools."

The last half will be found to contain much the most important and interesting course of events; important because of the ripening of the public mind in favour of a general reformation of Endowed Schools, and interesting inasmuch as many of the protectors of school misappropriations have disappeared, and others, of purer intentions, have taken their places.















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